THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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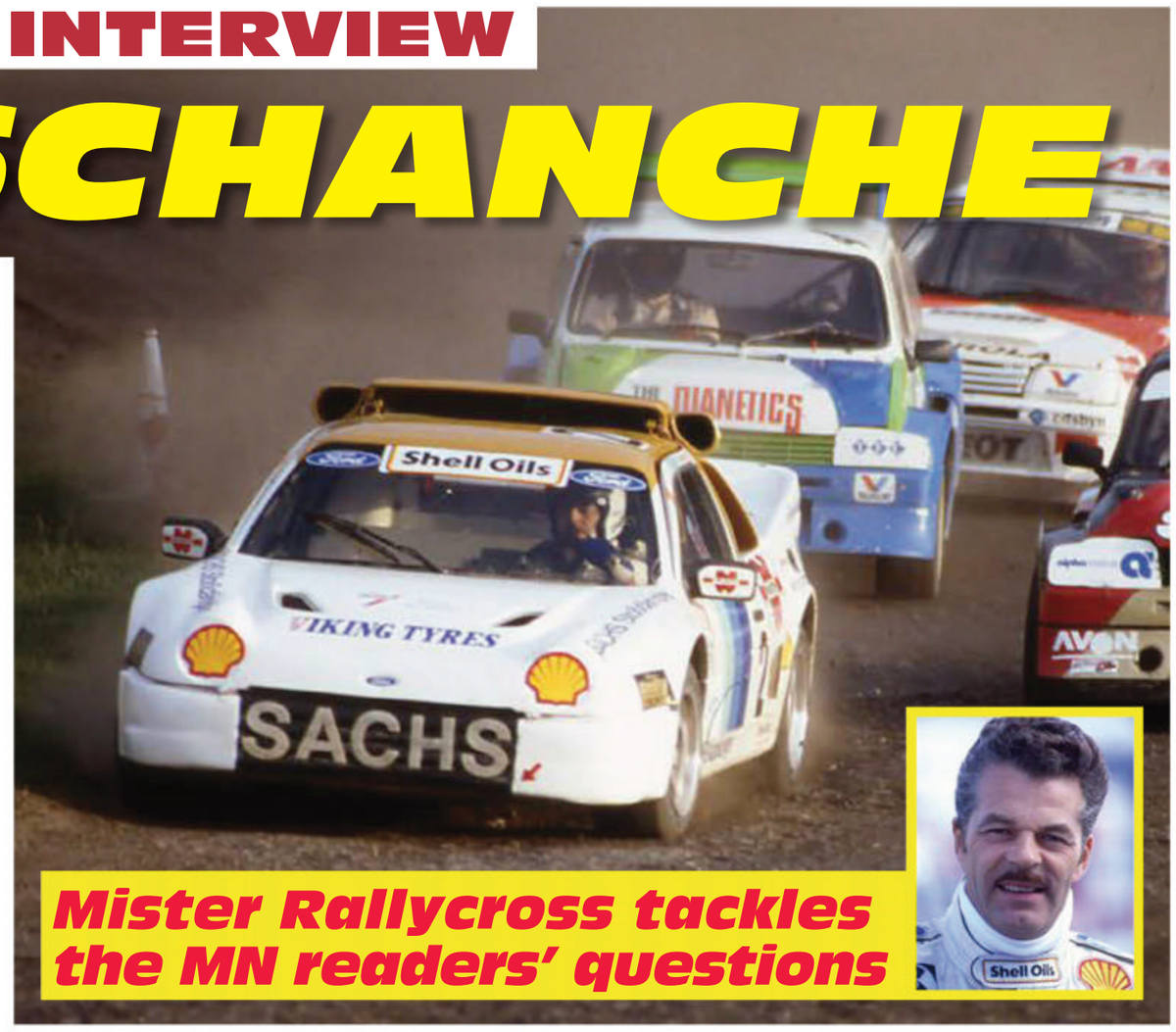
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MARTIN SCHANCHE



Mister Rallycross tackles the MN readers' questions

Maiden UK win for South Korean manufacturer boosts i30 man's title bid

INGRAM MAKES HISTORY FOR HYUNDAI WITH BTCC GLORY AT SNETTERTON

Ingram and Excelr8 made history at Snetterton

Tom Ingram topped reversed-grid race

By Matt James

Tom Ingram says he has vindicated his decision to switch teams over the winter as he took Hyundai's first-ever victory in the British Touring Car Championship at Snetterton on Sunday.

The Excelr8 Motorsport driver switched from the Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla team at the start of the season but says his reversed-grid race win in Norfolk has shown his choice was the right one.

Ingram, who is second in the standings after six races of this year's contest and just two points behind fellow Snetterton winner Ash Sutton, said: "It is an amazing feeling to have put it all together and come away with a win.

"We have been able to silence any doubters that there were, all those who were questioning what we were doing [switching to the Hyundai programme]. We have been able to prove them all wrong.

"There have been so many plusses and positives from the weekend. Not only because we have done really well and broken our duck for wins, but it is the team's home circuit and we won in front of fans. The car was insanely good over the weekend, and credit to the team and my engineer Spencer Aldridge."

As well as Sutton and Ingram, four-time champion Colin Turkington was the other winner at Snetterton in his WSR BMW 330i M Sport.

Full report page 18-19

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FEATURE

DOING THE SPLITS: CO-DRIVING AT OULTON

Our man in the hotseat for an MN Circuit Rally p20

INSIGHT

McLAREN'S RETURN TO A MAGIC TOUCH

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COMMENT

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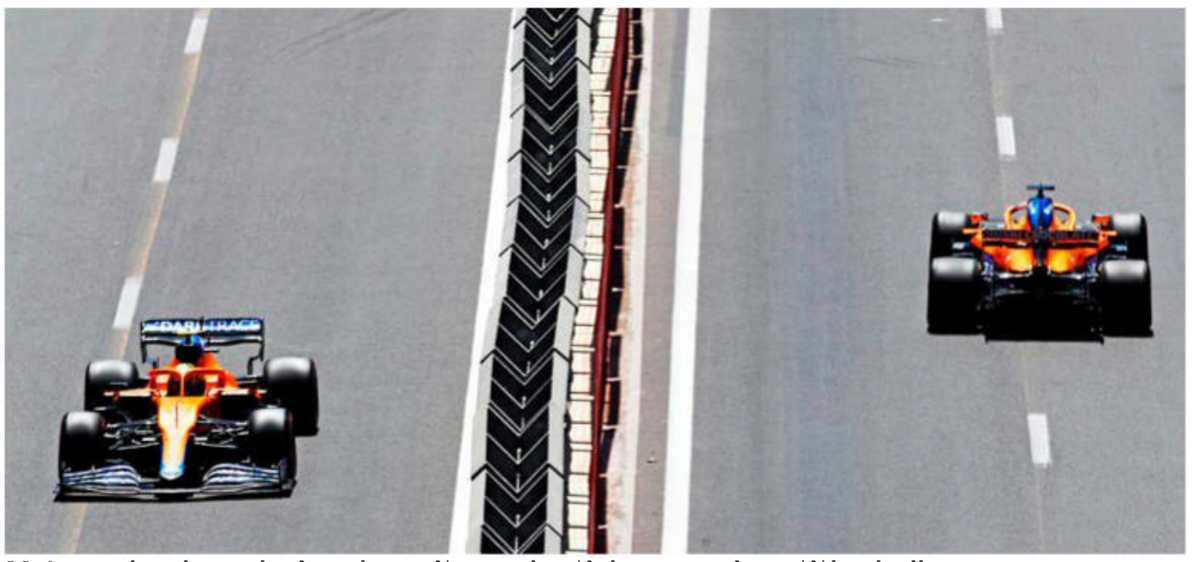

McLaren has been laying down its credentials as a serious title challenger once more

CLAWING BACK TO THE SUMMIT

It is easy to have had a love-hate relationship with McLaren. For those with long enough memories, the domination of the TAG, Honda, Niki Lauda, Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna era for the Woking team meant that Formula 1 races were becoming a foregone conclusion in the mid-to-late 1980s.

While it was predictable on the track, at least the British team kept things lively by having two drivers who were (almost literally) at each other's throats for a significant part of that decade. There was another purple patch at the end of the 1990s before every other team was put firmly in the shade by Ferrari and Michael Schumacher.

The slump for McLaren was significant and reached its nadir at 2015 when its disastrous recoupling with Honda resulted in ninth place, the low point that was matched in 2017. One year later, Zak Brown was appointed as the chief executive officer. Since then, the gradual climb back to the top has begun.

With young Briton Lando Norris behind the wheel (which brings with it his outward-focused view of the world) alongside the smiling assassin Daniel Ricciardo, McLaren seems like a much more approachable team now and there is a warm feeling about any of the results the team can achieve. With Norris onboard on a long-term deal too and Mercedes powerplants bolted in the back, all the ingredients are there for that upward trajectory to continue.

Elsewhere in this issue, the man in the hot seat for our MN readers' questions is Martin Schanche, a driver who it was so easy to support in rallycross in the 1980s and 1990s. The Norwegian was clearly the man out there who was wearing his heart on his sleeve when he was sawing away at the wheel.

The master engineer also mastered the art of appealing to the public. His rapid-fire answers to interviewers and his no-holds-barred attitude earned him a legion of fans. His answers to the MN posers are a real insight into his personality.

Luke Barry takes to the stages as he made his co-driving debut in the Neil Howard Stages at Oulton Park recently and he gives is an insight into his work in the passenger seat alongside Graham Coffey. Poor Graham...

We also have all the action from the latest rounds of the British Touring Car Championship at a searing Snetterton, where fans were finally welcomed back to the UK's highest-profile circuit racing competition. They weren't disappointed with the door handle-to-door handle action.

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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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How McLaren's is bouncing back

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RACING NEWS

BRITISH RISING STAR HOGGARD GETS FIA F3 CHANCE IN FRANCE

Award-winning youngster gets "unexpected" return opportunity on F1's Paul Ricard undercard this weekend

Hoggard: seven F3 wins

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey

Hoggard replaces Chovet at Jenzer

By Graham Keilloh

British rising star Johnathan Hoggard has a surprise race chance in this weekend's FIA Formula 3 round at Paul Ricard's French Grand Prix meeting, replacing Pierre-Louis Chovet at Jenzer Motorsport.

Twenty-year-old BRDC SuperStar Hoggard won 2019's Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year award, getting a Red Bull RB8 Formula 1 car test as part of his prize. He also took part in FIA F3's post-season tests last year at Barcelona and Jerez, though has not had a full-time drive since finishing runner-up in 2019's BRDC Formula 3 contest with seven race wins, a campaign that also won him a drive in 2020's Daytona 24 Hours via the Sunoco Whelen Challenge.

Hoggard said: "This was unexpected and happened so fast. I have worked for that opportunity for years and I will give my best from Paul Ricard on."

The Jenzer team, which did not reveal why Chovet has been dropped, said in a statement: "Following the inability for Pierre-Louis Chovet to participate in the next F3 FIA rounds, Jenzer Motorsport have decided to trust on Johnathan to drive.

"After strong results in British F3 and winning the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award, Johnathan did not have the opportunity to move to FIA F3 as planned, a miss which will now be fixed."

Team boss Andreas Jenzer added: "Getting a new driver onboard after all official tests and the first round are over is always challenging but we trust Johnathan to be fully involved and dedicated to catch this opportunity."

O'WARD LEADS INDY POINTS AFTER DRAMATIC WIN

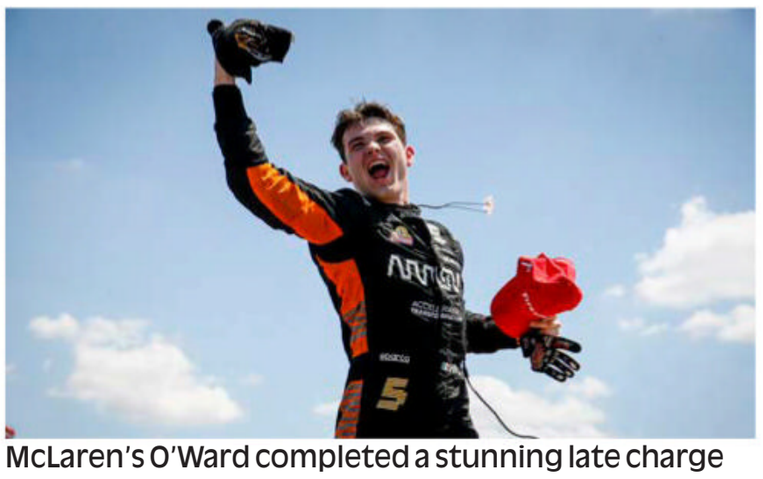
Pato O'Ward of Arrow McLaren SP moved to the top of IndyCar's points standings with race-two victory in last weekend's Detroit Belle Isle double header.

O'Ward, in the eighth race of this season, became the first competitor to win a second IndyCar race in 2021, and did so recovering from 16th on the grid after hitting the wall in qualifying.

Having risen throughout the race, O'Ward was sixth with 11 laps to go, then following a caution put in a stunning late-race charge to win, passing long-time leader Josef Newgarden of Penske with three laps left.

The Mexican, now a point clear of Ganassi's Alex Palou at the table summit, dedicated the win to team-mate Felix Rosenqvist who was injured in a race-one crash the previous day (*see separate story*) and to McLaren's long-time partner Mansour Ojjeh who died the previous Sunday.

Detroit's race one on Saturday was won by Rosenqvist's countryman Marcus Ericsson, the ex-F1 pilot taking his first IndyCar victory. Penske's Will Power looked set to win the twice-red-flagged affair but his car wouldn't fire up due to an ECU issue at the final post-stoppage restart with five laps left, letting Ganassi's Ericsson prevail. O'Ward finished third behind Rinus VeeKay of Ed Carpenter Racing.


McLaren's O'Ward completed a stunning late charge

Toyota's #8 took two wins from two after some team synchronised swimming

TOYOTA #8 TAKES PORTIMAO WIN AFTER TEAM ORDER SWAP

Toyota's #8 Sebastien Buemi, Kazuki Nakajima and Brendon Hartley trio took their second 2021 World Endurance Championship victory from two in the Portimao 8 Hours after a team orders call.

Toyota in its 100th world sportscar race had its two Hypercars take control over Alpine's polesitter via making fewer pitstops.

Jose Maria Lopez made the #7 Toyota's final pitstop under the safety car which let him emerge just behind Buemi. The Toyota pitwall then decided to swap positions to see if Lopez had a pace advantage, but when Buemi stayed with him the team swapped the cars back.

The debutant Glickenhaus 007 LMH finished 54 laps down due to a lack of pace, with starting driver Richard Westbrook reporting severe tyre wear, and a lengthy pitstop for damage after being caught in a skirmish with two GTE-Am cars.

JOTA's #38 Oreca of Roberto Gonzalez, Antonio Felix da Costa and Anthony Davidson won the LMP2 race after an entertaining four-way battle, just beating its sister #28 car.

Alessandro Pier Guidi and James Calado's #51 AF Corse Ferrari 488 GTE Evo took a clear GTE-Pro win while Cetilar in the GTE-Am contest made it a Ferrari victory double with Antonio Fuoco, Giorgio Sernagiotto and Robert Lacorte driving.

ROSENQVIST OK AFTER MAJOR INDYCAR CRASH

The opening IndyCar race of last weekend at Detroit's Belle Isle track had a lengthy stoppage after a heavy crash for Arrow McLaren SP's Felix Rosenqvist following a stuck throttle.

The Swede hit the wall on the outside of the street track's Turn 6 just after the one-third distance point of the Saturday race, and needed to be extricated from the car. The track clean-up and barrier repairs resulted in a one hour and 20 minutes' halt.

A statement from IndyCar medical director Dr Geoffrey Billows that evening read: "[Rosenqvist] was transferred to Detroit Receiving Hospital for advanced imaging and evaluation by the trauma and neurological services. Evaluation revealed no life or limb threatening injuries, he remains awake and alert, he will be observed overnight prior to discharge."

Rosenqvist meanwhile tweeted that "I'm doing OK, except a lot of soreness!" He was released from hospital on Sunday. Oliver Askew replaced Rosenqvist in Sunday's race two.

Rosenqvist's Detroit crash caused a lengthy stoppage

IN BRIEF

Le Mans limitation

A crowd of 50,000 will be permitted at this year's Le Mans 24 Hour race taking place on August 21-22. The number is approximately 20% of the event's usual attendance, and all spectators will be required to present the new health pass that was introduced in France last week.

BMW Le Mans return

BMW is to a return to top-flight sportscar racing after more than 20 years away from 2023 in the new LMDh prototype category. It follows the German marque confirming LMDh was a live option for its post-Formula E racing future. BMW joins Porsche, Audi and Honda's Acura brand in making a commitment to join the LMDh class.

Roberts off

Williams' Formula 1 team principal Simon Roberts will leave the team amid a 'streamlining' restructure. Roberts joined Williams last June as managing director of F1 operations before becoming team principal, initially on an interim basis, in September following the Williams family's departure. Roberts' responsibilities go to CEO Jost Capito.

New Ferrari boss

Ferrari last week named Benedetto Vigna as its new CEO, taking over from interim chief John Elkann who has been in place since last December's resignation for personal reasons of Louis C Camilleri. Vigna, whose stint starts on September 1, is a member of Ferrari's executive committee and president of STMicroelectronics' Analog, MEMS and Sensor Group.

Schumi car for sale

Michael Schumacher's iconic Jordan 191 in which he made his stunning Formula 1 debut in the 1991 Belgian Grand Prix at Spa-Francorchamps is up for sale for £1.25m. The chassis #6 is being sold by historic car dealer Speedmaster Cars. You can find out more at speedmastercars.com/vehicle/896.

Photo: Praga, Jakob Ebrey, Dan Bathie/Porsche UK, Team Hard, SMRC

Ex-Stig Collins to race Praga R1

COLLINS JOINS PRAGA LINE-UP AS BRAND'S 2022 PLANS TAKE SHAPE

Prototype manufacturer set for series with up to 10 rounds and own driver academy

By Graham Keilloh

Ben Collins will race the Praga R1 prototype in its dedicated Britcar class this year as the manufacturer's 10th and final guest driver, partnering ex-SAS soldier Jay Morton.

Collins was formerly BBC Top Gear's Stig, is the 2003 ASCAR champion and has varied racing experience including in Indy Lights, LMP2 at Le Mans and the British Touring Car Championship. Praga's other guest drivers this year include Abbie Eaton, Gordie Mutch and sim racer Jimmy Broadbent.

Collins, having tested the R1 at Oulton Park, said: "I loved the car – the braking and handling were absolutely fantastic in the wet – and was so pleased when Praga then suggested I partner Jay for the season. I can see a clear plan for us to really do well this season."

The 114-year-old Czech brand has also outlined its plans for a new Praga Driver Academy and for a one-make Praga Cup.

"[We are in] advanced discussions to begin a dedicated Praga Cup series in 2022, both within the UK and potentially expanding out to other European race venues," managing director of Praga Cars UK Mark Harrison confirmed.

"We are looking to offer a race series of between six and 10 rounds, as well as an academy programme that will, we believe, engage young drivers looking to race a closed-cockpit, downforce-focused car, and more mature gentleman drivers looking to scratch an aero itch!"

The brand also launched its new global brand centre and official UK arm – Praga Cars UK – as the start of a planned global expansion.

Collins will pair up with ex-SAS Jay Morton in Britcar

BRITISH GT4 DEBATES SILVER BALANCE

Salkeld took second place on debut in Pro-Am pair

British GT's GT4 drivers have taken differing views on the category's current system for balancing the performance of its Pro-Am entries with all-Silver-graded Silver Cup pairings.

Silver Cup entries are outlawed in GT3 but continue in GT4 although Silver entries serve an additional 26 seconds in a pitstop and carry 25kg ballast.

Safety car periods in Brands Hatch's May season opener played into Pro-Am runners' hands, leaving Assetto's Pro-Am Ginetta pair Charlie Robertson and Mark Sansom set to win before a late puncture handed victory to Silver Cup Century pair Will Burns and Gus Burton.

Will Moore of Academy Motorsport's Ford Mustang Silver Cup duo told Motorsport News: "Twenty six seconds and 25kg in the car is probably too much. If we all come in under a safety car that 26s is gone. I understand why they do it but we should have [either] weight in the car or the 26s, not both. I think they're [Pro-Ams] favourite all year, especially with the one-hour sprint races."

Chris Salkeld, who finished second on debut at Brands in Century's Pro-Am pairing with Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke, defended the system however, telling MN: "It really balances it. It makes everybody competitive whether you're a newbie like me, a seasoned guy like Andy or you're two of the hottest people in the paddock. It's a brilliant way of doing it."

CHAMP BRATT ADDED TO RICHARDSON CARRERA LINE-UP

Experienced Italian Formula 3000 champion Will Bratt has become a late addition to Richardson Racing's 2021 Porsche Carrera Cup GB season assault starting at last weekend's Snetterton curtain-raiser.

Richardson moved into the British Touring Car Championship-supporting category last year with a single car for teenager Will Martin, who finished fifth in the standings. The team has an expanded 2021 Carrera Cup programme, with Martin joined by Josh Malin who secured 2020's Ginetta GT5 Challenge title with the squad.

Bratt, 33, took 11th and10th-place finishes in Norfolk last weekend.He offers experience from an eclectic career in which he's finished on the podium in nearly a quarter of his races.He bagged 2009's concurrent Italian F3000 and Euroseries 3000 titles as well as has competed in BTCC, FIA Formula 2 and in selected Carrera Cup GB events during 2018 and '19, taking five top-six finishes in 10 starts. He now returns to full-time competition for '21.

"There are a lot of quick and experienced drivers on the grid this season," said Bratt. "It promises to be a hugely competitive year, and I can't wait to be part of it."

Bratt joins competitive 2021 Carrera Cup GB field

MELROSE JOINS TEAM HARD GINETTA ASSAULT

Formula Ford graduate Sebastian Melrose has joined Team Hard Racing for this year's Ginetta GT4 Supercup campaign, making his category debut last weekend at Snetterton.

The 23-year-old, who has Scottish and El Salvadorian nationality, joins championship returnee Joe Marshall at the team and took a best result of 13th on his Ginetta debut in Norfolk.

Melrose's FF1600 experience stretched from 2014 to '18, in which time he twice finished runner-up in the Scottish championship as well as took the David Leslie Trophy and the Champion of Brands crown.

In 2019 Melrose moved to closed-wheel racing in the VLN Series in a Walkenhorst Motorsport BMW. He was due to take part in Porsche Carrera Cup GB last year, but sat the season out due to Covid-19.

Melrose said before his debut: "I may have never driven a Ginetta before [the weekend before last] but I have plenty of rear-wheel-drive experience which should help me to get up to speed quickly. Hopefully [I will] achieve some solid finishes and sneak onto the podium."

Melrose: FF1600 experience

TURNER GIVES MIDDLEHURST PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Formula Ford 1600 racer Chris Middlehurst claimed the prestigious David Leslie Trophy earlier this month by winning the second National FF1600 race at Knockhill, and the prize was presented to him by FF1600 veteran Colin Turner. Former RAF pilot Turner sustained life-changing injuries, with both legs amputated, after getting caught in a multi-car crash in wet conditions at Silverstone's Walter Hayes Trophy last November. Turner has said he is targeting a return to race in 2021's Walter Hayes Trophy later this year.

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RACING NEWS

MISSION MOTORSPORT SMASHES ELECTRIC VEHICLE DISTANCE RECORD IN RENAULT ZOE

The charity that runs the Race of Remembrance sets a new mark for electric economy at Thruxton circuit

Photo: Mission Motorsport, Renault, BRSCC, Jakob Ebrey

Military charity broke record

Team in road-trim electric Renault Zoe beat previous Paris distance

By Graham Keilloh

A Mission Motorsport team of military veteran beneficiaries has smashed the world record for the distance driven on a single charge with a standard electric Renault Zoe at Thruxton.

The armed forces' motorsport charity team completed 475.4 miles of 'hypermiling', driving the electric car day and night for over 24 hours on Wednesday and Thursday last week at the Hampshire circuit at an average speed of around 19mph.

It beats the previous 351-mile hypermile record set in 2018 around the Paris Peripherique and is well in excess of the car's official 245-mile range.

Mission Motorsport, through motorsport and automotive opportunities, aids the recovery of those affected by military operations and runs the popular annual Race of Remembrance.

Its record-attempt team consisted of British veterans, the spouse of a serving soldier, and a hypermiling expert. The 2018 record of 7.9 miles per kilowatt hour was surpassed at 9.14, and without the benefit of higher ambient temperatures. Setting the record at Thruxton also means the track with the claim as fastest in the UK also now has claim as being the most economical.

The record needed to be for a standard car in road trim, and Hendy Group supplied two brand-new Zoes: one of which used standard OEM tyres, and achieved 424.7 miles, and the other, using ENSO special range-extending EV tyres, hit the 475.4-mile mark.

Mission Motorsport CEO and founder James Cameron said: "To cover such an extraordinary distance frankly blew us away. Driving through the night both in training and for the record itself with absolute precision was a challenge for the team."

Fiesta Junior boss Payne seeks drivers' perspective

FIESTA JUNIOR BOSS GETS CITYCAR CUP CHANCE

Fiesta Junior championship coordinator Laura Payne will compete herself for the first time next month in the CityCar Cup when it supports British GT at Donington Park on July 10-11.

Payne got the opportunity to compete in the British Racing and Sports Car Club's cost-effective entry-level tin-top category as a thank you for her efforts in transforming Fiesta Junior grids, from four in 2019 to 15 racing at Croft last month. She recently was also awarded the club's Bert Lamkin Memorial Salver.

The driving experience and completing her ARDS will also help Payne understand better how the Junior drivers feel coming through. She got behind the wheel of her Citroen C1 race car for the first time at Mallory Park recently on the club's pre-race meeting test day.

Payne said: "To say I am nervous about my first race in the CityCar Cup is an understatement, yet Pete [Edwards from The Motorsports School] and his team have left me feeling prepared. The nerves are still there, but I feel more prepared both technically and mentally as a result."

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE RETURNS WITH BRSCC

The Race of Remembrance at Anglesey circuit will return this November and will be operated for the first time by the British Racing and Sports Car Club.

The 12-hour endurance race, either side of a Remembrance Sunday service at 1100hrs in the pitlane, was administered previously by the British Automobile Racing Club. The event is run by the Mission Motorsport charity that supports service veterans' rehabilitation via motorsport, and the race's 2019 line-up included Dario Franchitti. The 2020 on-track event was called off due to Covid, though various online-based activities still took place.

Poignant race is back this year

Mission Motorsport last week unveiled its plans for the 2021 event that include its iRace of Remembrance counterpart, a 12-hour Thruxton karting race and that the pitlane service will be streamed live. The event is to take place on November 12-14.

BRSCC chief operating officer Paul McErlean said: "The BRSCC is honoured to be involved in such an iconic and important event as Race of Remembrance. I am hugely impressed by the levels of commitment and passion shown by James [Cameron, Mission Motorsport CEO] and all of his colleagues, and together with my team we will do everything possible to ensure that we deliver a successful and memorable event."

BRSCC UNVEILS NEW VEHICLES

BRSCC launched its two new safety vehicles

The British Racing and Sports Car Club unveiled a new safety and course car and its new rescue unit vehicle during the recent Mallory Park British Superkart championship season-opener meeting.

The brand-new dedicated rescue unit vehicle and the club's recently acquired Jaguar XF Sportbrake provided by club partner runyourfleet.com were launched at Mallory last month and the club says the vehicles showcase its commitment to the safety and efficiency of its meetings. Motorsport UK race, speed and kart executive Cheryl Lynch praised the move of making the investment amid the effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

BRSCC Midlands Centre rescue crew chief Matthew Greenwood and safety car drivers Jamey Firth and Tony Apsion, alongside the BRSCC's Trevor Parry and Paul McErlean plus Lynch and Colin Clark from Motorsport UK, were present for the launch.

OBITUARY

David Pierre 1945 - 2021

Motorsport News was very sad to learn that long-serving British Racing and Sports Car Club official David Pierre passed away last week at the age of 76.

Pierre's service spanned several decades and included being a race director and clerk of the course, overseeing British GT, National Formula Ford as well as W Series' 2019 inaugural campaign. From 2015 until last year he also was British F4's permanent clerk of the course. In addition he won BRSCC's 2014 Bert Lamkin Memorial Salver.

Pierre also was chairman of the club's Midlands Centre and – with extensive marshalling experience – provided widespread marshal and clerk training, with his teaching spreading as far as China and South Korea, and was involved in British GP marshal selection.

BRSCC chairman Peter Daly said: "Not only was he a fiercely loyal member of the club, he was also a dedicated volunteer, a superb benchmark for all clerks and marshals to measure themselves against and someone who truly knew the ins and outs of what it took to be a successful race official. I am certain that he will be deeply missed. I pass on my condolences to his family and colleagues for this very sad news."

Pierre: stalwart race official

RALLY NEWS

BOSS WILSON KEEN TO OVERSEE RALLY3 DEBUT

Malcolm Wilson will be in Poland this week to watch the international debut of his company's Polish arm's Ford Fiesta Rally3.

M-Sport is the first manufacturer to build a car to the FIA's new-for-2021 technical regulations and the company founder was keen not to miss the occasion.

"I want to be part of this historic moment for M-Sport, M-Sport Poland and the ERC," Wilson said. "It's crucial we work on developing ways to find affordable opportunities for young drivers in rallying and the Fiesta Rally3 can provide those opportunities.

"I can't wait to see the Fiesta Rally3 make its ERC debut in Poland in the capable hands of Ken [Torn] and Jon [Armstrong]. It's an amazing category and cost effective for four-wheel-drive experience which is essential for young drivers looking to progress through the ranks. The Fiesta Rally3 doesn't just cater to junior drivers either which is reflected in the entries as it's a very capable national car too. It's perfect for those who enjoy four-wheel-drive rallying, as you can have so much fun in a four-wheel-drive car."

Zasanda on Safari in 1969

VETERAN ZASADA, 91, TO CONTEST THE SAFARI RALLY

Sobieslaw Zasada, who won the second of his three European titles in 1967, the same year that Vic Elford claimed his first, is making a shock comeback to international competition when he contests the Safari Rally later this month, aged 91.

Zasada hasn't competed at the sport's top level since 1997 but is returning in a Ford Fiesta Rally3 prepared by M-Sport Poland for what will be the car's WRC debut.

"I've decided to participate in Safari because I'm very curious how that kind of events are like these days," said Zasada, who last tackled the Kenyan event in 1997. "I'm not going there for holidays, I still have a power to challenge myself. I know that a lot has changed since my last start in Safari and the only thing that's the same is the Kenya roads. I believe I can reach the finish."

Polish great Zasada's trio of ERC titles came in 1966, 1967 and 1971. In 1966 and 1967 there were three overall group titles awarded. In 1967, Zasada won G1, while Elford landed the G3 spoils.

Breen has a packed schedule of rallies over five weeks

Photos: Hyundai Motorsport, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

ESSENTIALS

Rally Poland
June 18-20
ERC round 1/8
Base: Mikolajki, Poland
Surface: Gravel
Stages: 14
Distance: 125.98 miles

Breen will be back in the WRC car again in Estonia

BREEN READY TO BEGIN BUMPER RALLY PROGRAMME WITH EURO OPENER

Irishman prepares for Rally Poland kick-off of continental contest at start of busy month

By Graham Lister

Craig Breen will start the first of four gravel rallies in the space of five weeks when the 2021 European Rally Championship begins in Poland tomorrow (Friday).

In addition to the 100th-anniversary Rally Poland, Breen is due to contest the Italian championship Rally San Marino followed by Rally Liepaja – round two of the ERC season – and finally Rally Estonia between now and July 18.

He'll be armed with a Hyundai i20 R5 for the first three events before he upgrades to a i20 Coupe WRC for Estonia's World Rally Championship counter.

The Tartu event was Breen's last gravel outing when it ran in September 2020. He's not competed on loose surfaces in a Rally2 car since Rally Liepaja the preceding month.

"There's a lot going on but it's every driver's dream to be in the car [so often]," the 31-year-old told Motorsport News. "There's a lot of preparation involved but, at the end of the day, I get to drive a rally car quite a lot so there's a lot to be excited about."

Aside from his second season in ERC as part of the Team MRF Tyres' development programme, Breen's return to the WRC's top tier in Estonia next month is a major focus for the Irishman, whose last appearance in the series on the Croatia Rally in April was hampered by a puncture early on leg two.

"Thank God we'll be back in the World Rally Car again," said Breen, who finished second to Hyundai team-mate and home hero Ott Tanak in Estonia last season. "It was a really good event last year and I really enjoyed it. It's one I've done quite a lot now so I've got some good experience. After missing the last couple of events we should have a good road position as well."

Mikkelsen will swap from Toksport WRC2 to the ERC

MIKKELSEN EXPECTING A TOUGH CHALLENGE ON MIKOLAJKI EVENT

Andreas Mikkelsen has named Craig Breen as one of his main rivals on Rally Poland. Mikkelsen and Breen are dovetailing their World Rally Championship commitments with ERC campaigns and both are competing on the gravel-based opener, which Mikkelsen won when it was a round of the WRC in 2016.

They are among a 76-car capacity entry, which features a record 40 Rally2 cars, and 72 ERC registered crews.

"It's strong with lots of fast guys," said Mikkelsen of the line-up in Mikolajki.

"You have Lukyanuk, Breen, Gryazin, these three in particular will be really fast [because of their experience] so I expect a big fight in Poland."

Mikkelsen will contest the ERC in a Skoda Fabia run by Toksport WRT, the same outfit behind his WRC2 effort.

He said his favourite tag for Rally Poland mattered little due to the high-speed nature of the event.

"It's natural when you've won the WRC event there, you're going to be one of the favourites," Mikkelsen said. "In that way it's nice but to win in Poland you have to be so committed from the beginning, so it doesn't matter who is the favourite. It's important to have a good qualifying [stage] so you can have a good road position and just go for it."

Mikkelsen, who leads WRC2 after five rounds, is due to contest the Safari Rally in between the Polish and Latvian ERC rounds. However, Motorsport News understands that car availability issues may preclude an outing in Kenya for the Norwegian.

BRIT ARMSTRONG SECURES LAST-MINUTE DEAL FOR ERC OPENER

Jon Armstrong has been handed a chance to try four-wheel drive again – and make a return to the European Rally Championship – after he secured a late entry on the opening round of the revamped ERC Junior Championship on Rally Poland.

ERC Junior is for Rally3 cars only from 2021 and Armstrong and co-driver Phil Hall will compete in one of two Fiesta Rally3s being run by M-Sport Poland. Ken Torn, the reigning ERC3/ERC3 Junior champion, will also compete for the Krakow-based squad.

"I've been really excited about the Fiesta Rally3 ever since my first test drive this year," said the Northern Irishman, a winner in this season's JWRC in a Fiesta Rally4. "I was quite keen to drive the Fiesta Rally3 again this year to be one of the first in the category and enjoy it.

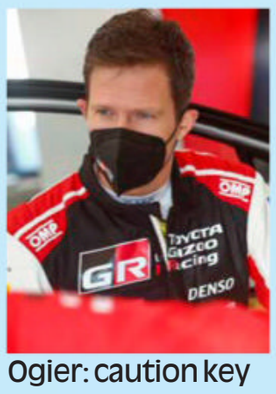
"Rally Poland is amazing, I was there in 2016 for the Fiesta Trophy and got my first international category win there, so I've got fond memories.

"Poland has nice roads and will serve as a perfect warm-up for me to do my Rally Estonia preparations. It's a good opportunity for me and Phil to develop, see what the Rally3 category is all about and it'll be quite cool to be working with M-Sport Poland on their home round."

Armstrong made three ERC appearances in 2015 and last competed with four-wheel drive in '19. The ERC Junior champion gets a season in the 2022 WRC3 Junior category, which is for Rally3 cars from next year.

Armstrong will switch his focus to Rally3 in Poland

RALLY NEWS


Ogier: caution key

OGIER PROMISES TO TAKE IT STEADY IN AFRICA

Sebastien Ogier is preparing to adopt an ultra-cautious approach when he makes his Safari Rally debut from June 24-27.

None of the current crop of World Rally Car drivers have competed on the Kenyan event before, which is returning to the WRC roster for the first time since 2002.

And with testing regulations preventing any running outside Europe, the gravel event will be a step into the unknown for the WRC regulars.

"It will be a great new experience for everyone and an untypical rally which will most likely require the adoption of a much more conservative strategy than usual," said Ogier, who will start the Safari Rally with an 11-point advantage over his Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans at the top of the World championship standings. "It's exciting to face up to a new challenge and I can't wait to be there."

MOFFETT TO STEP UP HIS PREPARATIONS AFTER BRC VICTORY

The multiple Irish champion wasn't expecting to win at Oulton Park, but now wants to stay at the top

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, M-Sport

Moffett's BRC win was unexpected

By Luke Barry

British Rally Championship leader Sam Moffett is planning a more serious approach to the rest of the season after surprising himself by winning the opening round at Oulton Park.

Moffett, driving a Ford Fiesta Rally2, edged the similar car of Rhys Yates by one second on the Neil Howard Stages after a big push on stages five and six that propelled him into contention. With the Nicky Grist Stages up next in July, Moffett has admitted the BRC is now a higher priority than it was before given his early success.

"I'm not a person who's looking for a career out of rallying, it's a hobby and I want to enjoy it as much as possible," Moffett said in an appearance on The Irish Rally Podcast. "My commitment up to it [Oulton] was not days of preparation or anything, it was [day job] work, and if I can balance both lives it's always good.

"I suppose yes there'll be a more serious approach to it which wouldn't have been as high in my priority [before], thinking that I may not be racing the guys at the very, very front of the BRC. I had an idea we would run around fifth, sixth but we're now at the top and it will make me focus more at night and try and watch more DVDs or YouTube of people from the Nicky Grist and all the rallies and it will make me put in the effort.

Sam Moffett will do prep

"If we want to compete there, the effort is going to have to go in because these guys do not hang around in the forests."

Moffett is also tipping his brother Josh – who finished seventh on round one – to bounce back. "Josh normally goes very well on those kinds of events," Sam said. "They were just trying to get their feeling with the Hyundai [at Oulton]. I do fear for myself on the gravel. I'd say he [Josh] will be a force."

FOURMAUX'S M-SPORT RETURN FOR SAFARI SHOWDOWN

A third World Rally Car outing for M-Sport's rising star Adrien Fourmaux and the return of Lorenzo Bertelli are the main highlights of the Safari Rally entry list.

Italian Bertelli's first start since Arctic Rally Finland in February brings the World Rally Car contingent to 11.

Fourmaux's rise in status, meanwhile, means Teemu Suninen will be relegated to M-Sport's WRC2 attack after the Finn took part on Rally Italy in a top-class Ford Fiesta.

However, there are no WRC3 regulars entered and only four WRC2 registrations with doubts that current leader Andreas Mikkelsen will make the trip due to car supply issues.

Co-driver Chris Patterson is entered alongside Gus Greensmith again after being forced to skip Rally Italy for personal reasons. Czech privateer Martin Prokop will again compete under the M-Sport Ford World Rally Team banner in WRC2.

The remainder of the 58-strong entry is made up by drivers from Kenya or neighbouring countries, plus Pole Sobieslaw Zasada (*see page 7*) and Italian Giancarlo Davite.

Fourmaux will be aiming to continue his WRC trajectory

NICKY GRIST WILL RUN BUT WITHOUT SPECTATORS

No spectators will be allowed on the Nicky Grist event

The 2021 Nicky Grist Stages has been given the go ahead to run on July 10, albeit in the absence of spectators who are being asked to stay and watch from home.

Special Stage TV will broadcast live coverage of every competitor from as many of the stages as possible. Clerk of the course Neil Cross described the decision to ban spectators – made at the request of the Military of Defence due to military training on Epynt at the same weekend – as "not ideal" but added "it's certainly better than not having a rally at all".

He said: "With the majority of the stages taking place on MOD land, and to avoid any confusion and misunderstanding on the day, we have decided that the most sensible option is to make this year's Nicky Grist Stages a non-spectator event. Whilst fans will be disappointed, we trust that they understand and appreciate the situation that the club is in and will instead watch the action live online."

Nicky Grist added: "Making this year's Nicky Grist Stages a non-spectator event was never our intention, but it had to be taken to safeguard the future of rallying on and around the Epynt military range. We've all waited a long time for rallying to return to the Welsh forests, and we knew that in these unprecedented Covid reopening times some compromises would have to be made – and we thank the fans for their understanding and look forward to welcoming spectators back in 2022."

The Nicky Grist Stages is the second round of the British Rally Championship as well as the first of both the BTRDA and Welsh Rally Championship seasons. The Welsh series has attracted its biggest-ever entry with over 150 registered competitors.

ELLIOT PAYNE TO REMAIN IN R5 FOR REST OF BRC SEASON

Elliot Payne will continue in a Ford Fiesta R5 for the rest of the British Rally Championship season scoring points in the BRC National series, instead of Junior BRC like originally intended.

Payne for Oulton Park made a last-minute switch to the R5 he'd used at Snetterton, and has now elected to make that change permanent.

"I think it'll be in the for the rest of the season now, I don't think we'll be going back into R2," Payne told MN. "Just to get used to four-wheel drive and everything like that. The R2, it's a mega car don't get me wrong but if I'm going from the R5 back to the R2 I think I'd just be screwing its head off everywhere and end up wrecking it."

The Neil Howard Stages was a trying BRC debut for Payne who beached his Fiesta on SS1 but things improved as he went on to set three top-10 stage times.

"On the last few stages we just altered the car a bit, altered the brake pressures, stiffened it a few clicks and the car just felt good," he said. "We got held up a little bit on last few stages but if we didn't get held up by them we wouldn't have been far off fastest time."

Payne's expectations are measured for the Nicky Grist Stages, although he will get his first run out on gravel one week earlier on the M-Sport Stages.

"I don't think we'll be anywhere near my dad [Charlie] or anything like that. It takes time on gravel, it's a completely different learning curve. At least on circuits you have plenty of time to run off wide into things."

Payne has decided to remain on his path in the Fiesta R5

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RALLY NEWS

Photos: Kevin Money, Roy Dempster, SMJ Photography, Eddie Kelly

Henderson was fast on two MN Circuit Rally rounds

RALLY RETURNEE HENDERSON KEEN TO TAKE ESCORT TO THE LANES

Henderson eyes his first multi-venue rallies since 2002

By Luke Barry

David Henderson is eyeing a return to multi-venue rallying for the first time in almost two decades after some eye-catching performances in the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship.

Henderson hasn't done a multi-venue rally since the Ulster Rally 2002 in a Ford Puma S1600. Driving an ex-Alan Kirkaldy Ford Escort Mk2, he returned to rallying in late 2019 for the first time in over 15 years with two rallies at Croft before back-to-back appearances in the MNCRC at Snetterton and Oulton Park. He took a fastest overall time on the latter event and lies seventh in the points table despite missing Donington.

"They're nice rallies, they're good for your service crew to watch and it's all close and friendly but it's not really the sort of thing I envisage I'll do a lot of," said Henderson of single-venue circuit events. "To be honest I wouldn't have done much circuit stuff [without Covid], I'm more interested in getting into the lanes. I don't think I'll do gravel. I've no problem doing gravel, I actually enjoy it more than Tarmac but the cost of doing it, the damage it causes, precludes me from doing much of that."

While Henderson is enjoying his current car, he added he is keen to try out an R5: "I want to see what it's all about," he said. "Some of my sponsors are quite keen to try and get into one so I do somehow need to see what all the fuss is about."

GREER TO FINALLY DEBUT CITROEN C3 R5 THIS WEEKEND

Jonny Greer has told Motorsport News there is still some work to do on his box-fresh Citroen C3 R5 before it's ready for the opening round of the 2021 Northern Ireland Rally Championship this weekend.

Greer – who won the competition four seasons ago alongside Kirsty Riddick by a single point – acquired the supermini from Citroen Racing last year and has been steadily improving it as the French team develops and releases upgrades.

"It will be good to finally compete in the car," said Greer, who performed zero car duties at the same County Down venue last year before Covid-19 led to the series being abandoned. "We are just taking each round as it comes – but the choice of events for the Northern Ireland championship look good.

"We have tried to keep the Citroen up-to-date as much as possible since we got it. Most of these have been fairly straightforward upgrades with software and stuff like that, but there are a few more yet to do."

Greer starts at number two for Saturday's Bishopscourt Stages. Multiple champion Derek McGarrity is the top seed in his recently rebuilt 2.0-litre Ford Focus WRC – a car McGarrity believes can land him a record-extending ninth drivers' crown.

Defending champion Stephen Wright is seeded fourth in his Ford Fiesta R5, with Stuart Biggerstaff (Ford Fiesta R5), Desi Henry (Hyundai i20 R5) and Kenny McKinstry (Subaru Impreza WRC) also appearing on the 101-strong entry.

Asked if he believes he can repeat his success from 2017, Greer said: "Winning the title was a great memory, but past results are no guarantee of future performances. I am just looking forward to getting back into the way of things after such a long time out of the car and try and take it from there."

SEEDED ENTRY LIST

Bishopscourt Stages

SEED	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Derek McGarrity/Paddy Robinson	Ford Focus RS WRC '08
2	Jonny Greer/Kirsty Riddick	Citroen C3 R5
3	Desi Henry/Dale Furniss	Hyundai i20 R5
4	Stephen Wright/Liam Moynihan	Ford Fiesta R5
5	Peadar Hurson/Damien Connelly	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
6	Stuart Biggerstaff/Chris Nelson	Ford Fiesta R5
7	Kenny McKinstry/TBA	Subaru Impreza S14 WRC
8	Kieron Graffin/Amy Graffin	Ford Fiesta R5
9	Sean Devine/Niall Devine	Ford Fiesta R5
10	Donall Sweeney/Dean O'Sullivan	Ford Fiesta R5

Wink has done over 50 miles of testing for first Tarmac event

WINK READY FOR ANOTHER SCOTTISH ATTACK IN I20

Scottish Rally Championship regular John Wink is preparing another potential title bid in 2021 with co-driver Neil Shanks, starting with the Argyll Rally on June 25-26.

Wink completed over 50 miles of testing in his Hyundai i20 R5 recently at Dundrennan to get acclimatised to asphalt driving, as Argyll – the opening SRC round – will be his first-ever Tarmac rally.

"Getting back in the car felt really good and such a welcome break from work," Wink told MN.

"[I'm] pretty nervous for Argyll but excited at the same time. It'll be good to get onto Tar and see what we can do. The first event for us will only be about getting used to the Tar and hopefully getting a finish."

Wink, who won the 2019 Wales Rally GB National Rally, has two SRC podiums to his name but is still chasing his elusive first victory. He's hopeful he can be in the mix this season though.

"We'll push again to see what we can do," he said.

"We have registered for the BTRDA too so we are planning some additional events to act as some seat time for the SRC."

FLYING FORTRESS STAGES: BY PETER SCHERER JUNE 13

FINCH CLAIMS THE SPOILS AFTER PROCTER GETS STUMPED

Steve Finch and Sam Fordham were never headed as their Ford Fiesta R5 took a 21 seconds victory over Scott Renshaw/Chris Bullock's Impreza on the Flying Fortress Stages in Northamptonshire.

There was a first-stage drama for top seeds Kevin Procter/Patrick Walsh as their Ford Fiesta 2000T slid wide and hit a hidden tree stump. This broke a wheel, damaged the driveshaft and caused the car to lose brake pressure.

They continued after a stop, repaired the damage and set three fastest times before the alternator failed and put them out for good.

Finch and Renshaw were tied over the first two stages with Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster's Mitsubishi Lancer E4 a further 3s down, closely followed by David Longfellow/Daniel Ward's Subaru Impreza.

Out of contention, though, was David McMullan/Marc Melhuish after their Mitsubishi Lancer E6 hit the same tree as Proctor.

Over the next two stages, Finch managed to pull out a 9s lead over Renshaw, while Hornbrook and Longfellow were still only 3s apart in third and fourth.

Finch managed to increase his winning margin over the final two stages, leaving Renshaw a comfortable second.

Hornbrook slipped to fourth on the penultimate stage after a late charge from Darrell Taylor/Steve McNulty's Ford Fiesta R5.

With Longfellow sidelined on the final stage with mechanical woes, Oliver Davies/Ben Innes not only claimed fifth overall but also Class 4 after Stephen/Catherine Booth's Ford Escort had a broken propshaft on stage four.

Martin Farrar/Andy Ward's Subaru Impreza completed the top six while, in Class 1, Steve and Sophie Black's Suzuki Swift set the pace all day. Matt Wood/Dan Petrie's Vauxhall Corsa topped Class 2.

Seventh-placed Gareth Bevan/Ashley Trimble won Class 3 in their Escort Mk2 after demoting Chris Stevens/Stephen Moyses' similar car on stage three.

Finch and Fordham's Fiesta led all the way

Results

Organiser: Dukeries MC **When:** June 13 **Where:** Grafton Underwood, Northamptonshire **Championships:** EMAMC, ANEMMC, AEMC/ASEMC **Starters:** 70 **Stages:** 6

1 Steve Finch/Sam Fordham (Ford Fiesta R5) 43m00s; 2 Scott Renshaw/Emma Morrison (Subaru Impreza) +21s; 3 Darrell Taylor/Steve McNulty (Ford Fiesta R5); 4 Dave Hornbrook/Ann Forster (Mitsubishi Lancer E4); 5 Oliver Davies/Ben Innes (Ford Escort Mk2); 6 Martin Farrar/Andy Ward (Impreza); 7 Gareth Bevan/Gareth James (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Ryan Mone/Freddy Hewitt (mpreza); 9 Chris Stevens/Stephen Moyses (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 Matt Wood/Dan Petrie (Vauxhall Corsa). **Class winners:** Steve Black/Sophie Black (Suzuki Swift S1400); Wood/Petrie; Bevan/Trimble; Davies/Innes

Wait for Irish field

MONDELLO RALLYCROSS UNDER THREAT WITH REGULATIONS

The third round of the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy set to be held at Mondello Park in Ireland next month has been postponed.

The Irish round had been due to take place on July 10-11 but has been "postponed due to Motorsport Ireland's prevailing policy on coronavirus measures," said a 5 Nations BRX statement. "The team is currently working on dates and a replacement will be announced in due course."

The Irish Rallycross Championship, which hasn't held a round since early 2020, will continue to run at the circuit on that July weekend.

While the next planned event on the 5 Nations BRX schedule is currently due to take place at Pembrey on August Bank Holiday weekend (August 29-30), Motorsport News understands that dates for a new Mondello round are being looked at for early August.

JORDAN TO RUN A RALLYCROSS PROGRAMME IN FORD FIESTA SUPERCAR THIS SEASON

BTCC champ has Euro RX machine for renewed attack on mixed-surface discipline

Photos: Hal Ridge

Andy Jordan has bought this car

By Hal Ridge

British Touring Car champion and World Rallycross podium-finisher Andrew Jordan is set for a return to rallycross with his own JRT team.

Jordan began his career in rallycross aged 14. He later spent two years racing in British Rallycross Championship's headline Supercar category in 2006 and 2007 before switching to circuit racing.

Having made selected appearances in top-flight rallycross since 2014, Jordan's team has now bought an Olsbergs MSE-built Ford Fiesta Supercar with plans to race in British and European championship events and JRT is currently in the process of fully rebuilding the former Euro RX event-winning car.

"Since Dad [Mike] and I went to Essay in France and watched European rallycross in 2007 it has always been the aim to race in that, not necessarily running the car ourselves, but that was the aim," Jordan told MN. "Obviously things then progressed with the World championship and stuff, but there's something about going and doing it ourselves, and doing really cool events."

Jordan is also planning to enjoy his return to rallycross. "I've always been all about the results in anything we race, which is good in a way and bad in another," he said. "We've got a great bunch of people [at JRT] and we're all mates, so the thought of going and doing European rallycross at Holjes [Sweden] or Hell [Norway], I'll want to do well, but it will be a cool adventure. I want to enjoy the whole project rather than it just being just all about the results."

Jordan says that he plans to do the last three rounds of the 5 Nations RX series at Knockhill, Lydden Hill and Spa and he will fit it in around his historic racing and Mini racing commitments. In 2022, he plans to cherry-pick the rallycross events he wants to contest.

McLAREN RACING TO JOIN THE EXTREME E LINE-UP IN 2022

McLaren Racing will enter the all-electric Extreme E series next year.

The Formula 1 outfit will join former McLaren drivers Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button in owning a team in the off-road series, where McLaren CEO Zak Brown already currently part-owns a team with his United Autosport outfit having teamed up with Andretti Autosport to form Andretti United this year. The squad has already claimed a podium in the season opener, but it's understood that the McLaren effort will be an all-new team and programme for 2022.

"From the moment Extreme E was announced we have been following the progress of the series closely," said Brown. "Our attention was immediately drawn by the innovative format of this motorsport platform, in particular the ability it gives us to accelerate and boost our own overarching sustainability agenda, which shares the same priorities of decarbonisation, waste reduction, diversity and equality. While Formula 1 will always remain at the centre of our world, like Indycar and esports, our entry into Extreme E is additive to the McLaren Racing franchise and will complement and help support all our programmes. Like all series we compete in, the competition objective is clear: we are there to win."

Extreme E meanwhile is currently seeking alternative destinations for the final two rounds of its maiden campaign "due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation in South America," said a statement.

The series had been set to visit Brazil and Argentina in October and December, but has now postponed those races until 2022.

A full McLaren effort will join the Extreme E line-up

BIG NAMES LINED UP FOR WORLD RALLYCROSS ATTACKS

Gronholm (leading above) will tackle world contest

WORLD RX ENTRIES (SO FAR)

TEAM	CAR	DRIVER
EKS JC	Audi S1	Enzo Ide (BEL)
Team Hansen	Peugeot 208	Timmy Hansen (SWE)
Team Hansen	Peugeot 208	Kevin Hansen (SWE)
GRX-SET	Hyundai i20	Niclas Gronholm (FIN)
GRX-SET	Hyundai i20	Krisztian Szabo (HUN)
Unkorrupted	Renualt Megane	Kevin Abbring (NLD)
All-Inkl	Seat Ibiza	Timo Scheider (DEU)

A number of entries have been confirmed for the 2021 World Rallycross Championship.

A pair of Peugeot 208s from Hansen Motorsport will feature for Kevin Hansen and World RX champion Timmy Hansen to drive, the pair remaining as team-mates in the family-run outfit for a sixth straight year.

Marcus Gronholm's GRX-SET team has confirmed the retention of Gronholm's son Niclas and Hungarian driver Krisztian Szabo in its Hyundai i20s. Gronholm won three from four RallyX Nordic events he entered recently, while Szabo switched to GRX for a programme of selected events last season and joins the squad full-time this year. Dutchman Kevin Abbring will contest his first full World RX campaign in an Unkorrupted Renault Magane which, having initially been built and developed by Prodrive, was previously run under the GCK banner in World RX.

"I've been working on some incredible projects, and I'm really excited about the future of motorsport," said Abbring, who has been working as a development driver for the GCK outfit's electric and hydrogen Dakar programmes.

"To get the chance to contest an entire championship at world level in parallel this season is something I've been working on.

"Thanks to the test activities I have been involved in, I feel faster than I've ever been. I've worked with every team member closely before and I'm starting to understand the Megane better and better. I can't wait to push for victories together."

SMEATHARPE STAGES: BY IAN HARDEN — JUNE 13

PAYTON AND VAUGHAN MASTER THE CONDITIONS AT A SWELTERING SMEATHARPE

A near-faultless performance in hot, humid conditions gave Josh Payton and co-driver Jamie Vaughan victory over Andy Vey/Richard Fletcher (Mitsubishi Lancer E4) by 13 seconds on the Smeatharpe Stages on Sunday.

A collision with a chicane on SS3 was the Ford Escort Mk2 pairing's only mistake as they scored their second win of 2021.

Despite a slippery, dusty surface, Payton decided not to hang about, driving flat out on SS1 he caught the field napping and took a five-second lead. Vey immediately struck back, benefiting from Payton's third-stage slip to grab top spot.

Payton responded by swapping from medium to hard compound tyres. With better grip and wear rate on the now-abrasive surface he went fastest overall on SS5, SS6 and SS7, opening a winning gap.

Jack Thorne/Andrew Richards finished third, starting off on the back foot after a cautious drive on SS1 cost 19s.

The setback failed to dent their confidence and they made full use of their Hyundai i20 R5's power and grip to mount a fightback, climbing from sixth and setting fastest overall time on SS8.

Brad and Nev Cole's first rally in their newly built Escort Mk2 was rewarded with a consistent drive to fourth place and first in the over-two litre class.

Results

Organisers: Burnham on Sea MC/Taunton MC **Where:** Smeatharpe Airfield, Devon **When:** June 13 **Championships:** ASWMC; Cotswold MSG **Stages:** 8 **Starters:** 68.
1 Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan (Ford Escort Mk2) 42m 53s; 2 Andy Vey/Richard Fletcher (Mitsubishi Lancer E4 RS) + 13s; 3 Jack Thorne/Andrew Richards (Hyundai i20 R5); 4 Brad Cole/Nev Cole (Escort Mk2); 5 Lewis Arkison/Ryan McCully (Escort Mk2); 6 Paul Morgan/Sam Stafford (Honda Civic); 7 Ian Sutton/Karen Phelps (Darrian T90); 8 Steve Harnkess/Paul Sanders (Escort RS2000 Mk2); 9 Nigel Willcox/Rob Symes (Escort Mk2); 10 Ben Short/Hannah Chislett (Mazda MX-5).
Class winners: Barry Pavey/Lucy Owen-Moczadlo (Escort Mk2), Short/Chislett, Arkison/McCully, Cole/Cole, Vey/Fletcher.

THE RACER

Pit talk from the HRDC

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HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

RIC WOOD

Racer and engineer
Age: 56 **Lives:** Stockport

Ric Wood: engine builder

He started racing at 21
"I'd followed racing and my dad used to take me racing. When I was 21 I bought my first race car. It was a Capri and I finished second to last at Oulton Park, but I had some fun with it. That was maybe 1986. Nowadays, we prepare and build racing cars from scratch. We do a lot of engine work and we do cylinder heads for a lot of historic race cars."

The business is in demand
"We've just grown and grown by hard work and reinvestment in new equipment and having good lads. We've got a team of 26 people. It's a lot of machining and we've got 12 CNC machines as well as an engine dyno and a rolling road. We do engines, cylinder heads and engine development on anything from Minis to V8s and we supply a lot of the engine builders in the UK."

He loves racing
"It's in my blood. What else would I do? There's not many people that can say they go to work and enjoy every day. But I do. I still get my hands dirty and I build every engine. I like something a little bit different and a challenge. When someone says you 'can't do that', well, that's just a red rag to a bull."

He's built three Nissan Skylines
"Someone said I couldn't build a Skyline as they are awkward to build. But there we are. I'm on number four now. The DNA of the Skyline is as an RS500 beater. It was always the best Group A car and in period they just tried to slow them down. We spend ages making sure they split flames. It is part of the mapping process, you know; if you can't make a good flame you're not doing your job right!"

They take a lot of work
"Now I've done it, I understand how hard it was to do and why someone hadn't done it before: make one from scratch. It's a lot of engineering and a lot of learning. The shell is an original car. There's plenty of man hours but it's all the bits you bolt on that are very special. We make them all from scratch because you can't buy anything new."

Photos: Paul Lawrence, Kevin Money, Motorsport Images

Cam Jackson was on form at Cadwell Park

JACKSON MAINTAINS REMARKABLE 100% RACE FINISHING RECORD

Formula Ford 1600 battler continues to be unbeaten in all 2021 races

By Paul Lawrence

Prolific historic single-seater racer Cam Jackson has just completed a remarkable run of 50 consecutive finishes in Historic Formula Ford, having finished every race he has started across five years.

As well as winning the overall title in 2018 and '19, Jackson has been on the podium 47 times in 50 races and won 30 races. In the other three races, he finished off the podium.

Jackson, unbeaten in six races to date this season, credits the remarkable sequence to the Neil Fowler team, which tends his cars. Across the last five seasons he has raced his regular Winkelmann, a Lola T200 and a March 709.

"It's a massive credit to Neil and the team," said Jackson after his latest win at Cadwell Park. "It is remarkable and they work really hard. The cars have never stopped during testing, qualifying or racing and must have done thousands of laps. It's been an amazing run and I felt a big relief when I crossed the line in the second race at Cadwell to make the 50.

"It goes back to the 50th anniversary Formula Ford race at Brands Hatch in July 2017," said the Lincoln racer, who has also won in Classic Formula Ford, Formula Junior and in a Crossle sports-racing car at Goodwood. To mark the achievement, he presented champagne to Fowler and the team at Cadwell Park.

Fowler, who still races occasionally was Historic FF champion fives time in a row from 2001 to '05. Jackson will now bid to extend his sequence at Donington Park on June 26-27.

Famous rallying Ford was back in action on John Overend

EX-ROGER CLARK ESCORT BACK TO THE STAGES

The famous ex-Roger Clark Ford Escort Mk1 'LVX 942J' returned to the rally stages earlier this month when it ran as course car on the John Overend Stages at Melbourne near York.

The car used by Clark to win the 1972 RAC Rally is due to return to competition later this year, notably on the Roger Albert Clark Rally in the hands of joint owner Dave Watkins. Aside from the Goodwood Festival of Speed, the car had not been used in anger since the late 1970s. Watkins is the car's fourth owner and has carefully rebuilt it ready to be used. "It's a dream to own this car," he said.

Langridge steps up as a birthday present

Former Historic Formula Ford racer Ali Langridge will graduate to slicks and wings this year as a 40th birthday present from her family.

London-based Ali has followed her father Andy and brother Adrian into racing and will take over their Tiga SF78 for three Historic Formula Ford 2000 events this summer.

Langridge will end a two-year gap from racing to run the Tiga at Donington Park (June 26-27), Brands Hatch GP in July and Oulton Park in August.

"Dad raced the Tiga at Snetterton in April but I've stolen it from him for three events and I've picked the best three tracks," she said.

Meanwhile, Andy and Adrian will team up this season in a Ginetta G16, recently rebuilt by Dan Eagling, in the Guards Trophy and Adrian will also race his Crossle 41F in selected FF2000 races.

HERO events kicks off classic road rally season

The first major classic road rally of the year was the HERO Summer Trial that ran over three days from a base in Telford. Nearly 60 crews took part in pre '86 cars and the winners were BMW crew Angus McQueen and Mike Cochrane (above) who had been runners-up twice previously.

IN BRIEF

Escort crew
British Historic Rally champion Simon Webster will have fellow Ford Escort Mk2 rally driver Alan Walker co-driving on the Nicky Grist Stages. Webster's regular co-driver Jez Rogers had already accepted a seat alongside Richard Lane for the rally so when Webster decided to do the event, his old friend Walker offered to sit in and give suitable advice and encouragement.

Entry accepted
One of the first 150 entries for the Roger Albert Clark Rally has now been withdrawn and so Stuart and Linda Cariss (Ford Escort Mk1) have moved from being first reserves onto the main entry list. Rally manager Colin Heppenstall said: "I was pleased to make the call to Stuart and Linda to confirm that they now had a place. They are true club-level competitors and have been loyal supporters of the event."

Festival is go
The Wolfstones Hillclimb element of the inaugural Yorkshire Motorsport Festival is going ahead as planned over the weekend of June 25-27, with around 80 mainly pre-86 cars competing on a 0.8-mile closed road hill near Holmfirth. Spectator tickets will be limited to 4000 per day to meet Covid requirements.

BHRC revamp
The cancellation of the Harry Flatters Rally, due to run on Epynt on July 25, has reduced the schedule for the British Historic Rally Championship to four events, starting with the Plains Rally on August 14. Subsequent rounds will be the Three Shires Stages (September 5), Trackrod Rally (September 24-25) and the Carlisle Stages (October 23).

R.A.C. prize
One competitor with a fully paid entry to the Roger Albert Clark Rally will win half of the entry fee back. All entries paid in full by June 30 will be entered into a prize draw and the winner will have 50% of their entry fee, £2150, refunded. The draw will take place live on the event's Facebook page on Monday July 5.

Trophy at Goodwood
The Goodwood Trophy race at this year's Goodwood Revival (September 17-19) is being renamed the Festival of Britain Trophy for this year. The race will celebrate 70 years since the original Festival of Britain on London's South Bank and will feature grand prix and voiturette racing cars of the 1930s and 1940s as ERAs take on Maseratis, Alfa Romeos and Talbots.

Trophy gets new name in '21

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FEATURE

MARTIN SCHANCHE

‘OTHERS HAD TO GET UP EARLY TO BEAT ME’

Legendary rallycross star tackles the MN readers’ questions. By Hal Ridge

Schanche didn’t rate himself as a driver

Martin Schanche is a six-time European Rallycross champion. He raced in the discipline in its formative years until the age of the current Supercar-type regulations and into the new millennium.

As a driver Schanche only had one setting: absolutely flat out, which earned him legions of fans. For the Norwegian that was a by-product of doing what he loved. An engineer-come-driver, Schanche is renowned for how his prowess out of the car too. He played a key role in the development of the legendary Xtrac Ford Escort, created together with Mike Endean, while he also breathed further life into, and tamed, Ford’s RS200 Group B monster for rallycross competition.

Schanche not only had a long relationship with British counterparts out of the car, but behind the wheel too. He teamed up with John Welch for many years, while he also voyaged into endurance racing in the World Sportscar Championship in the mid 1980s, sharing a car with Will Hoy.

The Pikes Peak Hillclimb and rallying are also on Schanche’s CV, but it’s for rallycross that he’s best known. Much like British Touring Car Championship racer Jason Plato, had Schanche played the percentage game he’d have plenty more titles in his pocket, but he was all about going as fast as possible any time he was in a racing car. His record 74 European Championship wins stands testament to that.

Schanche took time out of his still very busy schedule to answer MN readers’ questions.

Question: How did you start your motorsport career?
Richard Wilkins
Via Facebook
Martin Schanche: “I began at the age of 27 with an old, well, second-hand used car because before that I couldn’t afford to buy any car let alone use it. It was a Japanese TMC and there were three of them in Europe at that time. One in Britain, one in Holland and one in Norway. I started with that for the first year doing hillclimbs, sprints, the odd ice race, whatever was allowed.”

Question: What drew you to rallycross?
Jason James
Via Instagram
MS: “There was a test race at Lyngas and by then I had converted to a Ford Escort Mk1, with a 1.8-litre BDA engine. Bjorn Waldegard came with his Porsche and we started at the same time and, of course, at the startline he just naffed off, but I was hanging in there, I could follow him driving-wise. I was hanging on his tail like a little doggy 20 metres behind. I found it was so explosive and it fitted my personality so to speak. That was it, I was hooked.”

Question: Which rallycross car do you have the best memories from?
Peter Claes
Via Instagram
MS: “The Ford Escort Mk2 that I built in late 1977. It was the European Championship at Lydden Hill and four out of four races the organisers put me out with John Taylor, and he was Mr Ford Escort in those days. [He was] a very good driver with a very good car and a good sponsor. And four out of four times I beat him, so I thought ‘this is going the right way’.

“Then I think it must have been in 1983 I came out with the first turbocharged Zakspeed Escort. In those days, turbocharging wasn’t really done, especially not in rallycross. It was a very wet meeting at Lydden and I stuck on some Goodyear qualifiers from a Can-Am car that I had and that was it.

“I started last and before I came to the first corner, I dived on the inside and away I went. Murray Walker was the commentator, I think he was falling out of the tower: ‘listen to that Zakspeed engine, it’s so tractable he’s delayed his gearchange and he must have been doing over 10 grand on the rev limiter.’

“At that time, Erich Zakowski [Zakspeed founder] had some very good engines, he was in discussions at Boreham to build the new Ford rally engines. I don’t think he got the rally engines, but that [Lydden] race [had been] prime time on the BBC and when Murray Walker was almost falling about of the tower talking about the Zakspeed engine, after that I had free engines. Very good memories.”

Question: If you could relive any rallycross race from your career, which would it be?
Nicholas Barnes
Via Instagram
MS: “The first year I became European Champion [in 1978], at Buxtehude in Germany. I was absolutely a privateer, no sponsors, no mechanics and for that race I had a Swedish guy with me. He was a very pleasant fellow. I didn’t win, we had all sorts of accidents. One rim broke and I put a hole in the gearbox which we repaired. It was drama from start to finish, but I won the championship.

“The prizegiving went on into the night. After that, then the sponsor money started trickling in, very slowly, but it started. It was then I decided that I can drive trucks later on in life,

“I would go full bore as a driver. It was thin pickings, I think I earned three grand or something in 1979, but it kept me alive.”

Photos: Rallycrossworld.com

Ford was the weapon of choice early in career

Schanche formed an alliance with John Welch (behind)

Question: What is your favourite rallycross track past and present?
Nicholas Barnes
Via Instagram
MS: "Lydden Hill was definitely the one. Lydden was a driver's circuit, you could outfox people, trick them to brake too late, they drifted wide, you dived on the inside. It was great."

Question: What do you think of the current generation of rallycross cars?
Peter Claes
Via Instagram
Question: Do you think modern drivers are a bit vanilla?
Tim Shield
Via Instagram
MS: "Boring. They all look the same; the drivers I'm sorry to say are fairly colourless. None of them have the technical experience that we used to have in those days. Now they come and drop into a seat and haven't got a clue whether the engine is in the front, middle or rear."

Question: Would you consider driving again in a modern Supercar or an RS200 for a one-off event?
Peter Claes
Via Instagram
MS: "No. I drove for 30 years, 25 of them as a professional, if I haven't had enough by now then somebody should come and shoot me."

Question: How did your relationship with John Welch come about?
Brian Pryce
Via Facebook
MS: "As different as we are, it clicked. John was a typical Englishman, just plain, steady, no big surprises and I can't explain it, we just clicked together both of us.

"I used to stay with his parents for a week, fortnight and even three weeks once when we were building the first four-wheel-drive car. It was fantastic family. I miss John's parents, especially my second mother Peggy, they don't make females like that any longer. They were very friendly people. I remember in the early days I used to be there in the winter with a sheet and a blanket over me, that was a bit cold so next time I went to Norway I bought a lot of quilts and filled up the Granada Estate and took them to England."

"Today's drivers all look the same..."

Martin Schanche

Question: Did you enjoy developing the now infamous Xtrac 4x4 system with Mike Endean?
Matt Endean
Via Twitter
MS: "Yes absolutely. It was a bit of an adventure. We started in very early in 1983 with a clean sheet of paper and together we got to a result which system we should use.

"With Mike's connections and my sponsor money we started. Mike obviously used all his connections in the industry for doing all the castings for the gearbox and the internals. The 1983 season was a very exciting year, and the first race at Brands Hatch was even more exciting. That was the start of the four-by-four era."

Question: Where did you leave your brain before getting in the car? I feel privileged to have seen you race at Brands Hatch on several occasions. Great fun...
Ian Chedzey
Via Twitter
MS: "Most of the time I went to 98% then obviously the two last percent was never [really needed]. Brands Hatch was a difficult circuit, very slippery, but no I don't think I did leave my brain anywhere, because if I left my brain outside the car then I would have been killed long ago. Especially because I also did Le Mans at night in the drizzle on slicks."

Question: What was your favourite car you raced and do you still own any?
Michael Holmes
Via Twitter
MS: "All the cars I had were technically

continued on page 16

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FEATURE

Norwegian says Lydden is a favourite

Battling in the Escort RS2000 T16 in 1993

Heroes discuss tactics: Per Eklund (left) and Martin Schanche (right)

"I tried to get the race stopped by myself"

Martin Schanche

very good. I can't really pinpoint. The last car I had was the Opel Astra with all the engine problems due to someone that implanted a virus into the electronics system. When I found out, because I was a total dinosaur, I knew what the engine needed but I didn't know how to get there.

"The car was very light, when I built it the first time, it was 890kg. The RS200 was a pig to drive, you had to be a total steering wheel dictator, but when things clicked in place how to drive it, and how to set it up, after a while we got it there and there's several tracks where the RS200s still has the records."

Question: When you switched to Opel in 1999 you had a lot of problems, do you regret moving away from Ford?
Ken Bywater
Via Instagram
MS: "I could regret that I wasn't born a girl but it wouldn't help! The Opel engine was a little beauty, it was very light, very strong, Swindon made the first cylinder heads, but as I say it was the idiot that had been playing around in the electronics. It had individual cylinder fuel compensation, and it said in big letters from MoTeC 'Do not fiddle with this unless you have super equipment.'

"This guy didn't have any super equipment, so cylinder number one never got any compensation when the boost pressure came. That was the trouble, and it took me a long time to work it out because, like I said, I was a dinosaur. A laptop I understood how to start it, but I couldn't make it stop, so I'd pull the battery out of the bottom."

Question: Do you still want to kill Will Gollop?
Paul O'Neill
Via Instagram
MS: "No, no, no. Will and me were different but we had some smashing races, why should I kill him?"

Question: How would you best describe your battles over the years with Will Gollop?
Nicholas Barnes
Via Instagram
MS: "I think it was at Lydden Hill where I best remember scrapping at the front with Will. In the era where we had to fit restrictors on for the European rules, I went to Lydden for the British Championship [in 1997] and I remember Will saying 'that it doesn't seem to matter if he has a restrictor or not, he goes too bloody fast anyway'. We had a lot of good races."

Question: In 1992 you famously stood on the track in Finland after being pushed off on the previous lap. Explain that moment from your eyes?
Edward Fox
Via Instagram
MS: "Well, it was a bit stupid. My car was placed very dangerously, as the cars were battling around that corner. They could have hit the car. The organisers were drunk and I was looking for the red flag but there was no red flag so I thought f*ck it, I'll stop the bloody thing.

"I stepped out in the circuit and stopped it with my bare hands. People asked 'were you not afraid that you'd be driven over?' But I said no, we [the drivers] were maybe not the best of friends, but they were serious racers and they knew what they were doing and they all slowed down. It cost me £750 and ban for half a year."

Question: You got a three-race ban for that incident in Finland, what was the deciding factor behind putting Francois Delecour and Tommy Rustad in the car?
Edward Fox
Via Instagram
MS: "That was obviously to try to nick some points from the others, including Will Gollop. I didn't have many options,

Mister Rallycross was often Mister Sideways: Exploring the limits...

Schanche was a European frontrunner, here in France in 1989

Sitting proud: Schanche and RS200

Delecour was obviously fast and so was Rustad. He went to Ireland and won there. It was a move, whether it was the right move or not I don't know but I thought I'd try to let my car nick some points from the others so the gap would not be too large when I came back, but it was too large in the end."

Question: What was the secret to your huge success at Valkenswaard?
Adam Walker
Via Instagram
MS: "That circuit was also a driver's circuit but I don't know why. I had 12 wins there, I think. They even called call part of it after me. It was also the first track I went to where I got paid for driving, because in those days they had full television coverage [so] the sponsors were actually there with their stickers and money in their pockets. That's also where I started to drive together with John Welch."

Question: Which was your toughest championship-winning season?
Adam Walker
Via Instagram
MS: "I don't really know. I was very hungry. I went full blast whether I was leading by 200 yards or two yards, it was flat out all the time. And I think that triggered the press and the spectators, I think they liked it. When you look at the results, it was obviously the right way to go. But I don't know which was toughest."

Question: Was it real emotions every time, or was everything sometimes just for show?
Jimmie Osterberg
Via Instagram
MS: "I never drove for the show, I drove for myself. I had the pleasure of moving on the ragged edge, and sometimes I fell over the edge of course and I had some nasty roll overs and things but I never hurt myself, except for my pride of course. But that was my nature.

"I am as real as a £20 note, I never played for anything, it was always what I felt there and then and I spoke out. I didn't owe anybody anything, I did my best and if that was not enough then they could f*ck off."

Question: Did you get more enjoyment out of engineering success or driving success?
Harry George
Via Instagram
MS: "That is a tricky question. I never thought that I was the best driver. There was a lot of good drivers, but they had to wake up very early in the morning to beat me technically.

"I think it was the technical sphere and innovation that gave me a lot. I spent all my money on development. I never had a cottage or a boat. I did not need all the things people think are needed. In Norway a lot of people have got two cottages, one in the mountain and one down by the sea. I never had that."

Question: You did the Pikes Peak hillclimb with the Escort in 1984 – how was that experience?
Glen Jones
Via Facebook
MS: "We loaded the car in Frankfurt. We picked up some plane tickets for me and a mechanic. All we had with us was four spare wheels and a cardboard box of spark plugs, a timing belt and those things.

"When a man from Audi came to my mechanic and said that he'd love to see my spare engine, my mechanic showed him this carboard box. This German just shook his head and said we couldn't do it. I set a record time in qualifying, but unluckily enough halfway up the hill in the proper run I had a puncture and drove to the finish on three wheels, so I won the three-wheeled class at least, and came third in the rally class. That impressed the Americans so much."

Question: Why did you go Endurance racing, like at Le Mans, which couldn't have been further away from rallycross?
David Addison
Via email
MS: "Well, Linda Keen I think you are guilty. Linda was writing for Motoring News, and said to me 'with the speed you are showing, why don't you go to sportscar prototypes?'

"Easily ignited as I was, I thought 'yeah, why not, let's give it a try'. So I did. In the beginning I spun off sometimes and it was a big change, but when I came from the sportscars back to rallycross, I always braked too late. You didn't have to be super-fast but you had to be quick between your ears to calculate the fuel consumption in those days. Together with Will Hoy we had three smashing years. That was good. The speed was there and I liked it."

Question: Are you still involved in rallycross today?
Kim Lauristen
Via Instagram
MS: "No. I just make some parts for people and things, but no, not much."

Question: Do you see yourself in any of today's drivers?
Guy Brown
Via Instagram
MS: "No. From the era of John Welch, myself and Will Hoy, we had to struggle to get funds to build cars and today when I hear the amounts they are spending on awnings in the paddock I could have driven five bloody rallycross years for that money. It's a different world." ■

Another iteration of the Ford Escort came during the 1997 campaign

The electronics on Schanche's Opel in 1999 caused him untold woe

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BTCC REPORT: SNETTERTON

IN BRIEF

Hill goes nuts

Championship leader coming into the meeting, Jake Hill in his MB Motorsport car, was in the wars after only a handful of laps in the opening free practice session when one of the wheelnuts on his Ford Focus got jammed on after his opening run. That meant the Kent man, who was coping with 75kg of success ballast, only recorded five lap times. "It's our Valtteri Bottas moment," joked team manager Oly Collins. He nevertheless lined up in seventh spot on the grid despite carrying a full whack of 75kg ballast. Ballast and tyre problems hampered him in the opening two races while a loose turbo pipe in race three meant he only scored 11 points across the weekend at Snetterton.

Shootout at Snett

The qualifying session at Snetterton was the first time this year that the top 10 shootout system has been used. After a 25-minute session on Saturday afternoon, the top 10 are then given an extra 10 minutes with the track to themselves. Gordon Shedden's Team Dynamics Honda set the fastest time but he was later disqualified for a rear-wing infringement. That handed the position to Colin Turkington's BMW 330i M Sport.

Hawkins impressive

Motorbase Performance substitute driver Jessica Hawkins acquitted herself strongly on her second weekend in the BTCC as she stood in for Andy Neate, who took a one-round sabbatical. W Series racer Hawkins qualified the Ford Focus in 17th spot and felt she'd been held up on her fastest lap. She took three race finishes with a weekend's best of 21st in race two.

Weighty Proctor

Senna Proctor was forced to carry 39kg of success ballast into his maiden weekend with the BTC Racing team in its Honda Civic Type R. The Yorkshireman, who will take part in the remainder of the campaign, took over the success weight that had been earned by the car's previous incumbent, Dan Cammish. His most competitive run of the weekend came in race two, where he was knocking on the door of a top-10 finish. However, a five-second penalty for contact pushed him back to 16th in the final result.

Rowbottom's trophy

Three strong finishes, including a 10th spot in the final race of the weekend, allowed Dan Rowbottom to claim a 100% record in the Jack Sears Trophy – for drivers who had not scored a podium at the season's start – at Snetterton in his Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R. He is clear of Motorbase Performance Ford Focus man Sam Osborne.

Silverware for Rowbottom

Back to the top: Turkington in R1

Ingram was a delighted winner of race three

THE HEAVYWEIGHTS HIT BACK AT SNETTERTON

Turkington, Sutton and Ingram get their BTCC party started in Norfolk. By Matt James

It doesn't take long for the British Touring Car Championship's heavy hitters to reach the top. The three individual race winners from Snetterton last weekend – Infiniti man Ash Sutton, BMW's Colin Turkington and the Hyundai of Tom Ingram – all prevailed across the races and the trio is now sitting pretty at the head of the standings after six races.

Snetterton's collection of hairpins and heavy acceleration zones were manna for the rear-wheel-drive cars like Sutton and Turkington, while Ingram grabbed his chances in a controlled drive in the reversed-grid finale in Sunday afternoon.

Those who had shone at Thruxton struggled on what is a very different type of circuit layout in Norfolk but they should not feel too dejected. The Brands Hatch Indy layout is next up, and that will throw a whole new set of challenges into the mix…

Race one

From pole position, which he had inherited after Gordon Shedden's Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R was found to have an illegally positioned rear wing, Turkington knew that the first three miles of the opening race in Norfolk would be crucial to his chances of success.

There was no great divergence in option tyre strategy, with seven of the top 10 starting on the softer Goodyear rubber, so that was one factor out of the equation, but it would be all about generating heat into the tyres.

The rear-wheel-drive format of the WSR BMW 330i M Sport meant that it might well have an immediate advantage away from the line, but second-starting Ingram's front-driven Hyundai alongside would generate heat in its tyres faster than his Northern Irish rival ahead.

Ingram knew the opening exchanges would present him with his best opportunity of mugging the leader but, despite several strong looks at the rear end of the BMW, he was unable to complete a move.

From there, Turkington was able to pull away as he pleased and set laps in the later duration of the race that were supreme, and it pushed him to an almost three-second buffer by the end of the 20 laps.

"I knew I would have to work hard for the first half a lap or so," said the winner after climbing off the rostrum. "I had to try and be patient, get the car settled down and then get my head down. I was pushing at 10 tenths, but I was mindful of what might happen in the last third of the event given that I was on the soft tyres. I am delighted."

He was even more delighted when he clambered from the car as the left-rear tyre, which had picked up a puncture on either the last lap of the slowing down lap, slowly lost its air. "Colin was just dancing his car around in front of me on that opening lap, but he's been around for a while, hasn't he?" joked Ingram. "I just couldn't make anything stick."

The Excelr8 racing man said that he did try to push in the latter half of the race but admitted that some caution over the life of the front-left Goodyear tyre given the warmer temperatures was also high on his watch list.

Behind the top two, Rory Butcher finally landed a big result for the Speedworks Toyota team after a nightmare opening event in April where he only banked 11 points. His podium finish wasn't without its dramas though. "On the lap to the grid, the gear-cut stopped working," reported the Scotsman afterwards. "That meant I was having to back off the throttle on the upshift, which was not something I had been used to since my days in Formula Ford 1600…"

Ollie Jackson plugged away bravely in the opening part of the race in his MB Motorsport Ford Focus, which was prime among the leading runners using the medium tyres. It was lap eight before the WSR BMW 330i M Sport of Stephen Jelley used its superior traction out of the Agostini hairpin to move into fourth at Hamilton.

Jackson hung on to fifth position and just fended off the rejuvenated Adam Morgan (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport) and a feisty Daniel Lloyd (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) to the line.

Jake Hill ran in eighth place early on with his maximum load of 75kg and fought on manfully with an eye to his rear-view mirror. Tom Oliphant wriggled through in his WSR BMW 330i M Sport but Hill's ninth-placed finish was an excellent result. Hill finished ahead of Chris Smiley's Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N and the closely following Sutton's Infiniti Q50, which had had an engine change after qualifying to solve a lack of power.

Shedden's redemption after being slung to the back row of the grid was 15th spot, and a single point, after the 12 laps. He was followed over the line by Josh Cook (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R), who had been complaining of a lack of balance in his Japanese machine fitted with its 66kg of success ballast. Finishing outside the points had the only benefit of meaning that he would head into race two with no weight.

Race two

The increase in the top level of success ballast this year had Turkington worried pre-season – the top whack had been increased from 60kg to 75kg – and the Northern Irishman, who had been used to carrying that amount from previous title-winning campaigns, said those extra 15kg might just tip the balance away from his BMW.

It looked, for nine laps, like his concerns might have been allayed. A strong start helped him reach Wilson first while behind, Jackson leapt from fifth to second with an around-the-outside move on those queuing for the apex of the right-hander.

While Jackson, with the grippier softer rubber, fended off a train comprising Ingram, Butcher and Jelley, Sutton sliced inside Morgan's BMW for sixth at Oggies on lap two. Not bad for a driver who had lined up in 11th spot. With the 48kg out of his rear-wheel-drive Q50, the reigning champion was about to set off on a very Sutton-esque drive.

On lap four, Sutton dealt with Jelley by diving inside his rival at Wilson, and a few corners later he used superior grip coming through Oggies to depose Butcher. A lap later, he was at it again, rounding the outside of Ingram's Hyundai to claim third spot.

Sutton took second from Jackson on lap seven with a move at Wilson. Despite starting the lap in third spot more than 2.6 seconds behind leader Turkington, he had slashed that advantage to just 1.6s at the end of the tour. What was happening next seemed destined.

Turkington could only resist for a few corners before Sutton chopped inside coming into Agostini.

"The car was perfect," said Sutton, who measured his pace over the remaining four laps to finish just out of reach of the BMW while protecting his soft tyres at the same time. "I had hoped that I would have made more progress in race one, but we had always targeted race two for the win. The tyres were on their last legs over the closing period, so I backed if off to make sure I made it to the end."

Turkington, for his part, was pleased to have collected a second-placed finish and banish the memories of previous struggles with 75kg. "If it had been later in the year, maybe I might have fought a little harder to keep the position," he admitted. "But this is only round two and we need to keep banking the points."

Jackson had a tense place swap with Ingram with two laps to go, but the Hyundai ran slightly wide at Palmer and that allowed the Ford to regain the position, which he held to the flag. "The soft tyres jut gave me the edge," said the podium finisher.

Behind Ingram and Butcher, Oliphant took sixth and Aiden Moffat (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) claimed seventh. However, Moffat was later pinged for an out-of-position start which dropped him to 10th and promoted Jelley. That was a double-whammy for Moffat, as the number seven was drawn for the reversed grid, giving Jelley and Oliphant a front-row lockout for WSR.

Shedden's weekend didn't really improve as he could only make it up to 11th at the flag after various post-race penalties had been applied to others. He fared better than Cook in 14th, though, while Thruxton hero Hill was struggling with rooted soft tyres on his Focus and trailed home in 24th.

Race three

With two rear-wheel-drive BMWs on the front row for the finale, the question was which one of the black machines would race to the flag first. But this was a BTCC race three, and things are rarely that simple.

The flashpoint came on lap two, when the German freight train at the front imploded. Jelley had reached Riches first and fended off Oliphant, but the leader ran deep into the Wilson hairpin at the start of lap two. Oliphant sensed a chance and looked to the inside of the sister car, only

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Mike Hills

Sutton was in supreme form in the second race

Shedden was left to fight back through the pack

Hill struggled with tyre and turbo issues across the weekend

for the pair to make contact as they checked up for Agostini.

The best seat in the house was that of Ingram, who had outdragged Butcher away from the line and was looking on in third spot.

"I think Jelley was a bit nervous, because he was braking early into the hairpins – but I was still quite surprised how aggressive Oliphant was being behind him," explained the Hyundai man. "When they got into each other on the run to Agostini, there was a nice big gap for me on the left-hand side of the track, so I took it!"

Jelley held on to first, but Ingram ran around the outside of Oliphant into second. Worse was to follow for Oliphant as fourth-placed Jackson fancied taking a run inside the second BMW at Agostini, but the pair made contact. It spun Oliphant out of contention and ultimately left Jackson with a puncture.

Once the dust had settled at the end of lap two, Jelley was left with Ingram in his wheeltracks and, remarkably, Sutton running in third after a strong opening lap where the Infiniti had crucially jumped Turkington away from the line and also dealt with Butcher.

Ingram's move for the lead came at Wilson on lap five and he soon scampered 1.9 clear, but was just as well he did. The flying Sutton demoted Jelley at Wilson on lap eight and had prised the door open to allow his new shadow, the flying Scotsman Shedden, to get a decent shot at third, a move which the Honda man completed at Agostini. Before the end of the lap Cook would be through too.

While that was the order of the top four set – and it would allow Ingram to take his first BTCC win in a Hyundai and record the first for the Excelr8 team, the battle between Sutton and Shedden for second was absorbing. A couple of late-race wobbles from Sutton kept Shedden glued to his bootlid.

In the end, the Honda man came up just short but it was finally something to smile about on a weekend when he should have started race one from pole.

Behind Cook and Jelley, Butcher brought his Corolla home for sixth place with a subdued Turkington behind. Morgan, Jack Goff's rapid Team Hard Cupra R and Dan Rowbottom's Team Dynamics Honda rounded out the top 10.

SUPPORT RACES

Taking the chequered flag first was no guarantee of success in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB. Lorca Hanafin (JTR) dominated the opening race from a well-earned pole, only to be handed a 10-second penalty for an out-of-position start, handing a 33rd career win to Redline Racing's Dan Cammish and dropping Hanafin to third behind Cammish and Harry King (Team Parker Racing). Harry King fought his way from fifth on the race two grid to take the lead on a set of new tyres, but was given a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits. That handed the win to rookie Kiern Jewiss (Team Parker Racing) with Cammish second and a disappointed King third.

Matthew Rees (JHR Developments) took two British F4 Championship wins, one on Saturday and the second on Sunday, while Georgi Dimitrov (Richardson Racing) won race two for Richardson Racing. While Rees shone in the final race, Australian Marcos Flack (Argenti Motorsport) starred after a safety car period to hustle his way to second place.

Three different winners highlighted the competitiveness of the Ginetta Junior championship, with Callum Voisin (R Racing) taking an interrupted opener, before Liam McNeilly (Fox Motorsport) won race two. McNeilly was in the hunt in race three, but a wide moment at Riches cost him time to race leader Tom Edgar (R Racing) who claimed the race win.

Adam Smalley (Elite Motorsport) took two Ginetta GT4 Supercup wins, but his hopes were dashed in race three when he relieved Tom Hibbert (Rob Boston Racing) of the lead. Contact was made as the exited Wilson before more contact at Agostini when Smalley went across the front of Hibbert's car put him out of the race. That allowed Ginetta Junior graduate Josh Rattican (Elite Motorsport) to take his first senior race win while Hibbert took second.

Three frantic Mini Challenge races produced two wins for Lewis Brown (LDR Performance Tuning) while Brad Hutchinson (Motorsport Apps with MPHR) battled his way to the front in race three.

David Addison

RACE WINNERS

■ **Porsche Carrera Cup GB**
Race 1 (14 laps): Dan Cammish (Redline Racing); **Race 2 (14 laps):** Kiern Jewiss (Team Parker Racing)

■ **British F4 Championship**
Race 1 & 3 (11 & 10 laps): Matthew Rees (JHR Developments); **Race 2 (11 laps):** Georgi Dimitrov (Richardson Racing)

■ **Ginetta Junior**
Race 1 (8 laps): Callum Voisin (R Racing); **Race 2 (9 laps):** Liam McNeilly (Fox Motorsport); **Race 3 (8 laps):** Tom Edgar (R Racing)

■ **Ginetta GT4 Supercup**
Race 1 & 2 (7 laps & 12 laps): Adam Smalley (Elite Motorsport); **Race 3 (12 laps):** Josh Rattican (Elite Motorsport)

■ **Mini Challenge**
Races 1 & 2 (10 laps): Lewis Brown (LDR Performance Tuning); **Race 3 (9 laps):** Brad Hutchinson (motorsportapps.com with MPHR)

Smalley was a double victor in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup clashes

RESULTS

BTCC
Round 4
Laps: 12 Track: very warm and very dry

	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Colin Turkington* (27)	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	23m36.287s
2	Tom Ingram* (33)	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	+2.932s
3	Rory Butcher*	Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla	+9.451s
4	Stephen Jelley*	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	+13.960s
5	Ollie Jackson	MB Motorsport Ford Focus	+16.921s
6	Adam Morgan*	Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport	+17.572s
7	Daniel Lloyd*	Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra	+18.049s
8	Tom Oliphant* (15)	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	+18373s
9	Jake Hill (75)	MB Motorsport Ford Focus	+21.951s
10	Chris Smiley	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	+22.583s

11 Ash Sutton (48) (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) + 22.852s; 12 Jack Goff (9) (Team Hard Cupra R) +23.759s; 13 Daniel Rowbottom (21) (Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R) +24.993s; 14 Aiden Moffat (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) +25.415s; 15 Gordon Shedden (Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R) +26.015s; 16 Josh Cook (66) (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +27.736s; 17 Jason Plato (57) (Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra) +28.663s; 18 Senna Proctor (39) (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +29.382s; 19 Sam Osborne (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) +29.942s; 20 Carl Boardley (Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50) +32.857s; 21 Tom Chilton (Ciceley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport) +34.464s; 22 Aron Taylor-Smith (Team Hard Cupra R) +35.358s; 23 Jessica Hawkins (Motorbase Performance Ford Focus) +38.361s; 24 Rick Parfitt* (Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N) +40.530s; 25 Jade Edwards (BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R) +41.030s; 26 Jack Butel* (Excelr8 Trade Price Cars Hyundai i30 N) +41.774s; 27 Glynn Geddie* (Team Hard Cupra R) +42.730s; 28 Sam Smelt* (Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla) +43.230s; 29 Nicolas Hamilton* (Team Hard Cupra R) +58.734s. **Pole position:** Turkington 1m55.294s (92.70mph). **Winner's average speed:** 90.55mph. **Fastest lap:** Turkington 1m56.559s (91.69mph). **Lap leaders:** Turkington 1-12. **Brackets** = success ballast; * = Soft tyres

Round 5: 12 laps Track: dry

	DRIVER	TIME
1	Sutton*	23m49.604s
2	Turkington (75)	+0.451s
3	Jackson* (39)	+8.603s
4	Ingram (66)	+8.769s
5	Butcher (57)	+10.524s
6	Oliphant (21)	+10.859s
7	Jelley (48)	+12.065s
8	Morgan (33)	+13.346s
9	Goff*	+13.662s
10	Moffat*	+16.204s**

11 Shedden +16.577s; 12 Lloyd (27) +16.925s; 13 Smiley* (9) +16.228s****; 14 Cook +18.605s; 15 Rowbottom +21.190s; 16 Proctor* +17.295s***; 17 Boardley +22.534s; 18 Taylor-Smith* +26.536s; 19 Osborne* +26.720s; 20 Plato* +39.770s; 21 Hawkins* +42.017s; 22 Butel +42.534s; 23 Edwards +42.734s; 24 Hill* (15) +44.681s; 25 Hamilton +47.417s; 26 Smelt +48.429s; 27 Parfitt 56.019s; R Chilton* 0 laps/damage; R Geddie 0 laps/damage. **Fastest lap:** Sutton 1m56.795s (91.51mph). **Winner's average speed:** 89.71mph. **Lap leaders:** Turkington 1-8; Sutton 9-12. **Brackets** = success ballast; * = Soft tyres ** = 5-second penalty for out-of-position start. *** =5-second penalty for contact; **** 1-second penalty for contsct

Round 6: 12 laps Track: dry

	DRIVER	TIME
1	Ingram (48)	23m56.024s
2	Sutton (75)	+1.144s
3	Shedden*	+1.617s
4	Cook*	+3.217s
5	Jelley (21)	+6.756s
6	Butcher (39)	+7.469s
7	Turkington (66)	+7.768s
8	Morgan (15)	+8.744s
9	Goff (9)	+9.916s
10	Rowbottom*	10.355s

11 Smiley +11.293s; 12 Hill +11.718s; 13 Lloyd +12.403s; 14 Taylor-Smith +14.118s; 15 Edwards* +14.575s; 16 Oliphant (27) +15.262s; 17 Moffat (33) +16.002s; 18 Plato +17.120s; 19 Chilton +18.655s; 20 Osborne +19.993s; 21 Butel +23.054s; 22 Geddie +27.350s; 23 Hawkins +27.739s; 24 Parfitt +38.849s; 25 Hamilton +48.741s; 26 Proctor +1m57.596s; R Smelt 8 laps/oil leak; R Jackson (57) 2 laps/puncture R Boardley* 0 laps/damage. **Winner's average speed:** 89.31mph. **Fastest lap:** Shedden 1m57.910s (90.64mph). **Lap leaders:** Jelley 1-4; Ingram 12. **Brackets** = success ballast. * = soft tyres.

Drivers standings

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Ash Sutton	80
2	Tom Ingram	78
3	Colin Turkington	75
4	Josh Cook	60
5	Jake Hill	57
6	Rory Butcher	47
7	Stephen Jelley	46
8	Jason Plato	38
9	Ollie Jackson	36
10	Gordon Shedden	35

11 Adam Morgan 34; 12 Tom Oliphant 34; 13 Jack Goff 33; 14 Daniel Rowbottom 32; 15 Dan Cammish 30; 16 Daniel Lloyd 29; 17 Aiden Moffat 21; 18 Chris Smiley 15; 19 Aron Taylor-Smith 8; 20 Tom Chilton 5; 21 Sam Osborne 4; 22 Carl Boardley 4; 23 Sam Smelt 2; 24 Jade Edwards 1.

Independents Trophy

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Ingram	86
2	Sutton	86
3	Cook	69
4	Morgan	60
5	Goff	58
6	Lloyd	55
7	Plato	53
8	Rowbottom	52
9	Shedden	51
10	Moffat	41

11 Smiley 37; 12 Cammish 32; 13 Taylor-Smith 29; 14 Boardley 19; 15 Chilton 18; 16 Jack Butel 10; 17 Senna Proctor 9; 18 Rick Parfitt 7; 19 Nic Hamilton 7; 20 Edwards 7.

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FEATURE

Photos: SMJ Photography. Luke Barry

WHEN A NOVICE CO-DRIVES ON ONE OF BRITIAN'S BIGGEST RALLIES

Luke Barry is more accustomed to writing about rally cars than competing in them, but that all changed on the Neil Howard Stages

Coffey and Barry were rewarded with a finish

Barry (l) attempted to read the pacenotes for Graham Coffey (r) in British Rally opener

"That's quite cool," quipped William Creighton as he cycled through one of Oulton Park's garages, gesturing to the stickers 'L BARRY' stuck onto the side of Graham Coffey's Ford Fiesta S2000 Turbo. I wasn't going to disagree with him. After 23 years and 10 months on planet Earth – and over five years working in rallying in some form or another – my chance had come. I was competing on an event.

The Neil Howard Stages is a fading memory as a rally that happened two-and-a-half weeks ago, but the adrenaline is only just beginning to settle.

Working in motorsport enables you to do many cool things. Arguably it's the best seat in the house as you get to mingle with the drivers and cars and get paid for that privilege. I've now had my way in, and my shot in the true best seat in the house. It didn't disappoint.

Although I've now only ever sat in two rally cars before, it's fair to say I haven't been messing about. The first was on a test with five-time Scottish and 2011 British Rally champion David Bogie while at Oulton, I was strapped in alongside Coffey who, as a two-time winner of the Neil Howard, is rapid.

Clearly, I would be the weak link in this equation. But I was OK with that. I was just staggered to even have the opportunity.

Without wishing to make this an Oscars speech, my gratitude has to be expressed not only to Graham and the ATM Engineering team but also to Darren Spann and the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship. I'll forever be in their debt.

I had done my fair share of worrying up to the event. That ranged from little things, like making sure I could clip the tethers on my HANS device on and off my helmet without too much drama, to the much more important details like timing and map reading. Realistically though my job was, essentially, to not cock up. Call the splits right and we would be OK. To put it more succinctly, I was to be 84kg of ballast for Mr Coffey.

I'm not sure much will ever prepare you for your first-ever rally stage. I'm quite a deep thinker. I tend to overanalyse. Thankfully, as soon as the balaclava and helmet were on and the belts were fastened, I just got on with it. I just did what I had to do.

It did soon become clear to me however that I certainly don't have the minerals to be a top-line co-driver (as if I didn't know this already)! While I'm immensely proud I didn't make a mess of any of the splits, this information was all I could really offer poor Graham. My information was restricted to the bare essentials. But the fear of feeling unwell as someone that's prone to car sickness, making a botched job of whatever notes I could call and just generally my brain not keeping up with the pace had made my mind up pretty quickly. I wanted to walk before I could run.

Stage one was the first eye-opener of the weekend, and it was action-packed. Thankfully for us, it was mostly plain sailing but within the first few corners we had already passed a beached Elliot Payne, a stuck Kev Furber and then a spun-out Nigel Worswick who eventually brought out a red flag. We almost made it to the end but had to back off on the last couple of corners and were therefore handed a notional time.

The test had left its mark on me though. The launch of the Fiesta off the line was superb. It was already quick as the tyres bit into the asphalt, but once it really got going, it really got going. I got sudden tunnel vision as if we were moving at warp speed. And the braking, my word. It isn't sane to be approaching bus stop chicanes that quickly and leaving yourself such little distance to slow the car down in.

Stage two was a smoother affair as it was a repeat of one, except without the on-stage drama. Stage three was a new test of my character as there were more splits but we made it through in one piece. The next was a bit of a disaster as a stall at the first hairpin out of the pits restricted us to just the 67th best time overall, and there was a brief scare when Joshua Davey's Darrian went up in flames in front of us. Thankfully he and co-driver Tamsyn Davey were unharmed.

Stage five was one of the first few occasions I really noticed where I was costing Graham some valuable seconds. On the gravel sections, when close to another car, the dust kicked up made it a challenge and my silence down the intercom didn't exactly help matters – I didn't know where I was either…

The next stage was probably the best of the rally. Things just seemed to click, although the baking Cheshire sunshine was not a welcome gift when competing in an enclosed box with your fireproofs on! There was some respite on the fast bits via the airbox, but overall this was a rally where better physical fitness would have stood me in better stead.

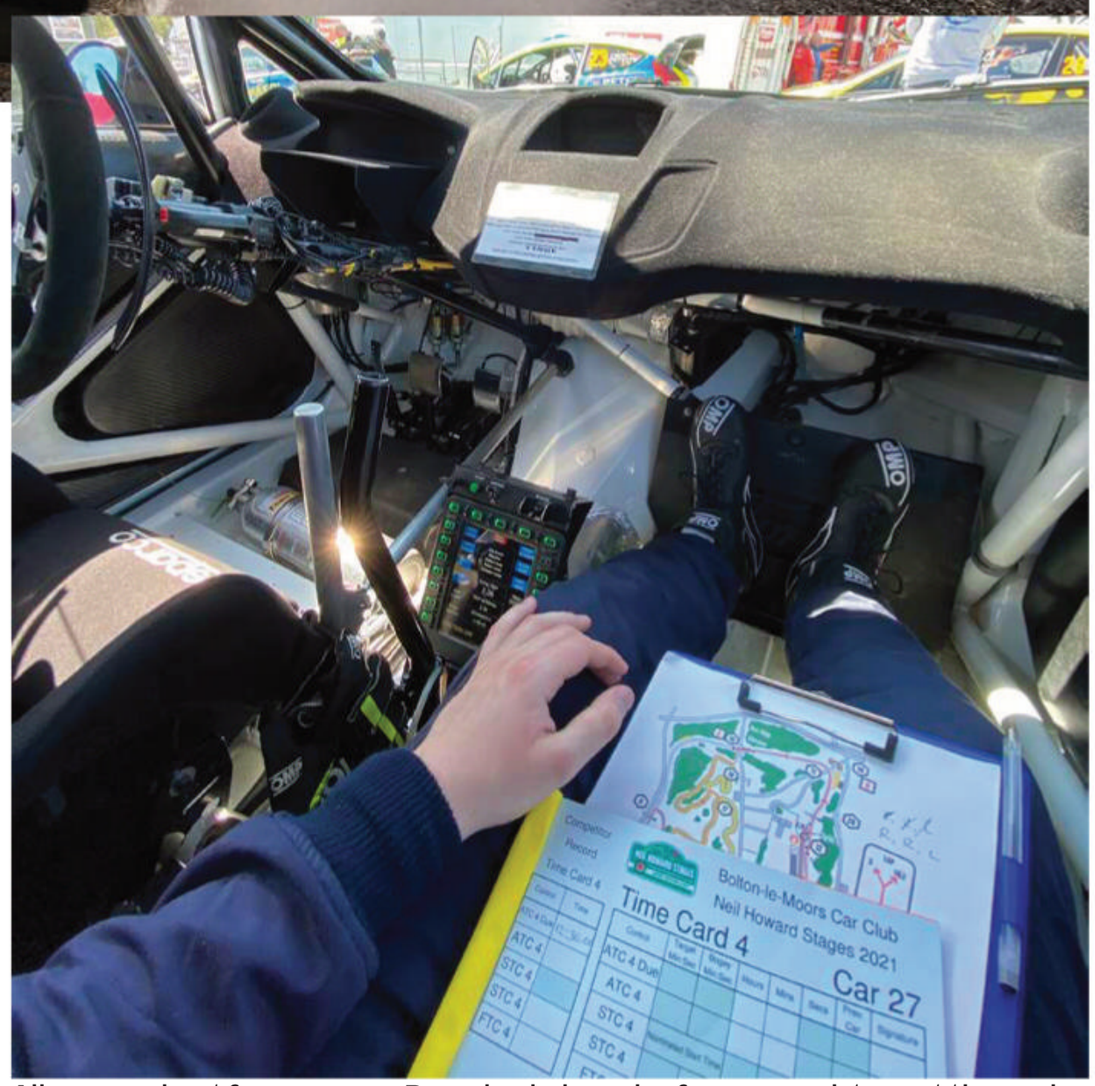
The fourth and final layout was best suited to our partnership. Me, the quite literal silent partner, wasn't really needed as it was essentially just a few laps of Oulton Park. There were some moments though; a spin for Charlie Payne just in front of us and a close merge with the aforementioned Creighton another.

That merge with Creighton turned out to be vitally important as we beat him and Liam Regan by two seconds overall. They won't hear the end of that from me. We'll quietly ignore the fact the Junior WRC pairing were two driveshafts and several horsepower down though…

We won't talk about my near error where I went to write our next control time down, started chatting to Graham on the intercom and then forgot it either. Deal? Thankfully it was nothing a conversation with Michael Wilkinson – co-driver to Stephen Petch who was two cars ahead of us – wouldn't fix. My blunder aside it must be said how effortless and simple the contactless timecard system is though. Displaying your clock-in time and car number as you enter the stage and then displaying your finish time and next clock-in time as you exit was easy for a novice like me to grasp.

I'm not sure it'll ever make sense to me that I've actually done a rally. I see pictures of car #27 from the event, and then I see my daft self sitting in there! It's a memory I'll treasure forever. The experience has given me a stunning level of respect for the pace the top rally drivers are on, but even more appreciation for the job of the co-driver.

Now, where do I sign to have a go at this driving malarkey…?



All mapped out for our man: Barry had a bunch of paperwork to sort through

STAGE TIMES

Coffey's Neil Howard Stages

STAGE	TIME	STAGE POS	OVERALL POS
SS1	8m 28s*	19th	19th
SS2	8m07s	27th	27th
SS3	5m25s	30th	29th
SS4	5m37s	69th	32nd
SS5	6m40s	33rd	31st
SS6	6m27s	28th	30th
SS7	5m54s	41st	28th
SS8	5m50s	35th	27th

*notional time

OVERALL LEADERBOARD

Our man's finishing record

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty	Ford Fiesta Rally	249m32s
25=	Brendan Cumiskey/Ronan O'Kane	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+2m43s
25=	Damian Cole/Dale Bowen	Skoda Fabia R5	+2m43s
27	Graham Coffey/Luke Barry	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+2m56s
28	Barry Morris/Tom HutchingsDarrian	T90 GTR+	+2m57s
29	William Creighton/Liam Regan	Ford Fiesta Rally4	+2m58s

"I got a bout of tunnel vision"

Luke Barry

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FEATURE

PUTTING THE WONDER BACK INTO WOKING

McLaren's rise back to the top is building step-by-step, as James Roberts explores

Lando Norris has been leading the line for rejuvenated team

Daniel Ricciardo has scored in five of the six F1 races so far in 2021

A short time after Ron Dennis's departure from McLaren, I was visiting the team's futuristic-looking headquarters on the outskirts of Woking. As we passed through one of the long corridors underneath the steel and glass edifice above, my guide spotted a collection of chairs, clumsily discarded in the gangway. The sight of the clutter irritated him. "That would never have been allowed to happen in Ron's day," he sighed.

It was the smallest of acknowledgements that standards at the once great championship-winning team had slipped. After three decades in charge, Dennis' protracted exit from McLaren left the team rudderless. An ill-fated alliance with Honda sunk the once-mighty force into the doldrums.

The team that has accrued 12 drivers' and eight constructors' titles has not won a grand prix since Jenson Button triumphed at Interlagos in 2012 – or to put it another way – 163 races ago. But the green shoots of recovery are well advanced. In the past 12 months McLaren has achieved four podiums (three by Lando Norris) which is one more than they managed in the previous seven years. So how has the team transformed from an unfocused entity into podium finishers?

The key date in McLaren's recent history was April 2018 when the company's operational structure was revamped and racer-turned-commercial guru Zak Brown was appointed chief executive officer of a newly-formed sub-division: McLaren Racing. With the backing of the company's main Bahraini shareholders, Brown was given a clean sheet of paper to take the racing team back to the top of Formula 1.

In 2009 Brown co-founded the sportscar team United Autosports with his old friend Richard Dean *(see sidebar)*. In 2017 the team entered the LMP2 class of the Le Mans 24 Hours, a race that was won outright by Porsche. Masterminding victory that day was the former BMW F1 engine engineer Andreas Seidl. Impressed by his abilities, Brown headhunted Seidl and appointed him team principal at McLaren.

In unison, James Key (formerly of Jordan, Sauber and Toro Rosso) was drafted in as McLaren's new technical director. Both set to work at the beginning of 2019 to reshape the team at Woking. While *key* changes were made in the technical department, Seidl spoke at length with his new staff to understand problems and to iron out failings. People were put in the right places with trust and responsibility. Chairs would no longer be left strewn in corridors. Discipline was instilled through a calm and methodical approach and together with Brown the company grew a renewed sense of motivation. And there was genuine excitement at the beginning of 2019 with two new young racers taking their seats in the MCL34: Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris.

Recruiting Seidel was a key move

At the tender age of 19, Norris had already an impressive CV before he'd reached Formula 1. As a karting champion, he graduated to Ginetta Juniors at 14 and quickly demonstrated his turn of speed. A year on he beat Ricky Collard and Colton Herta to the British F4 title and stayed with Carlin to win Euro F3 in 2017. He was then runner-up in FIA Formula 2 a year later – in his debut season.

Brown had little hesitation giving Norris a seat in F1, after he'd been impressed with his lap times in comparison to Fernando Alonso, when the pair were pitched together as team-mates with United Autosports at the

"I haven't seen Lando make the rookie mistakes"

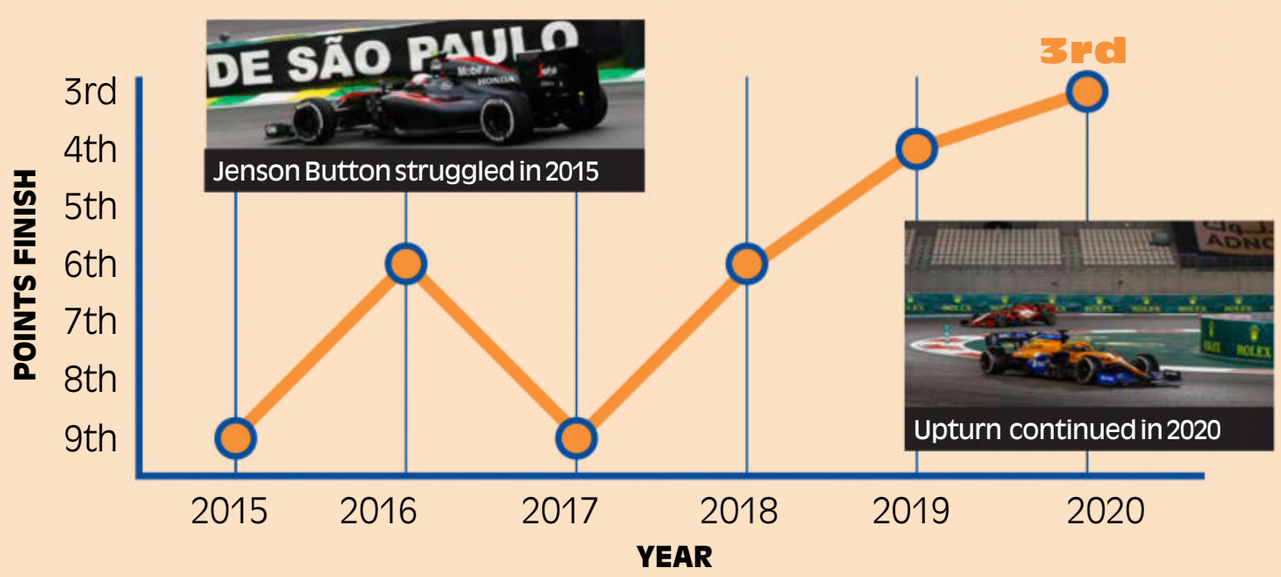
Zak Brown

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey

Zak Brown (right) has turned fortunes around

Monaco was a happy hunting ground with a third position finish

McLAREN'S RISE



Brown returns to the race track

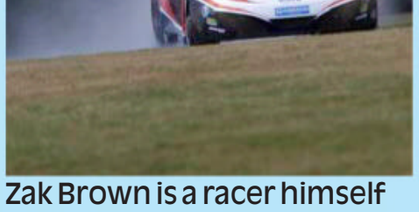
This coming weekend, Zak Brown will be back behind the wheel of a McLaren as he competes in the third round of the GT4 European Series at Zandvoort. Brown will team up with the co-founder of his United Autosports outfit, Richard Dean, a man he first met 30 years ago.

Brown grew up in California and used to set his alarm to watch F1 races early in the morning. As a youngster he came over to England and enrolled in the Jim Russell racing school at Donington Park. His instructor was Dean who offered him a place to stay in nearby Sheffield and the two have been firm friends ever since.

After getting as high as the national class in British F3, Brown decided to carve a new path in sports marketing and honed his skills in the commercial side of motor racing, getting multinational companies to sponsor teams and drivers.

With the day job sorted, he was able to fund his hobby of racing and in 2009 established United Autosports with Dean. Brown won a round of the British GT championship in 2012, while his team expanded and entered Le Mans. This year United Autosports were crowned Asian Le Mans Series LMP3 champions.

When Brown started his new role at McLaren, he kept his on-track endeavours limited to historic racing, but is now relishing the chance to get behind the wheel of a McLaren 570S this coming weekend.



Zak Brown is a racer himself

2018 Daytona 24 Hours. His decision has since been rewarded with some outstanding drives from the Somerset lad, including those thrilling final laps in the two Austrian races last year and podiums in Imola and Monaco this season. The reward for Norris was confirmed prior to Monaco: a multi-year contract extension that will tie him with McLaren until at least the end of 2023.

Brown has known Norris since his championship-winning Formula Renault days in 2016 and speaks highly of the 21-year-old. He says that part of the youngster's talent is down to his demeanour. For someone of his age, he isn't overawed by the task at hand.

"When he did his first free practice F1 session with us at Spa in 2018, he was no different in the garage than he was when I was with him in the junior formulas," says Brown. "He handles stress very well."

As an enthusiastic amateur racer, Brown is well aware of the emotion a driver goes through prior to a qualifying session or a race, but says there is none of that worry with Lando.

"A lot of times you can see stress and nervous twitches come out in drivers and you can tell that adrenaline and anxiety are building up. You don't see that with him. And I think he drives in a very relaxed way – there is something that is very impressive about him."

Comparing drivers and their speeds is never an exact science, but in the team-mates Max Verstappen has had so far in F1, it's fair to say that at Toro Rosso, Carlos Sainz ran him closest. Yet in Lando's debut season alongside Sainz, he impressively out-qualified his more experienced team-mate 11-10. And already in 2021, seven-time grand prix winner Dan Ricciardo has seen first hand how quick Norris is behind the wheel, even getting lapped at Monaco by the British racer.

"Lando has come into Formula 1 with a real maturity," adds Brown. "I haven't seen him make the rookie mistakes that a lot of others do by being over-zealous and over-confident. If he does make a mistake, he doesn't try and fix it in the next corner. If a lot of younger drivers have lost places off the start, they will try and make all those positions up at the next corner and that's where it all goes wrong.

"If we can give him a car capable of winning races and championships, I have no doubt that he is capable of achieving that," says Brown. "I hope we get a chance to do that, not just once, but multiple times."

As soon as Sainz revealed he was having talks with Ferrari, Brown sought Ricciardo to join the team, having first approached the Australian when he left Red Bull at the end of 2018. Although he's taken a little while to get up to speed since joining this year, Ricciardo's credentials are strong and the pairing with Norris is a formidable one.

With drivers in place, one of the first major strategic steps made after the arrival of Seidl and Key was to sort out the power unit.

While the partnership with Honda was doomed from the very beginning, the desire was to get hold of (arguably) the best engine on the grid. From the start of 2021, McLaren has been reunited with Mercedes.

In addition, key tools and infrastructure were given the green light, including an upgraded driver-in-the-loop simulator and a new windtunnel. But all these things cost money and while the team were pushing hard for a budget cap to bring the costs of F1 down, the sudden impact of the pandemic hit McLaren hard. Throughout last year the team went through a slew of redundancies and new investment was sought.

That materialised last December when a long-term financing deal was struck with a US-based sports investment group. MSP Sports Capital acquired a 15% stake in McLaren Racing (as opposed to the other entities, Automotive and Applied Technologies) for £185m. That will increase to 33% by the end of next year in a deal that values McLaren Racing at £560m.

In addition, two months ago the team sold its impressive Norman Foster-designed Technology Centre in Woking (chairs included) for £170m as part of a sale-and-leaseback deal aimed at reducing debt and underpinning the company's financial position. As part of the deal, McLaren has agreed a 20-year lease on the site.

On the morning of last week's Azerbaijan Grand Prix it was announced that one of McLaren's long-term shareholders Mansour Ojjeh had passed away. Ojjeh's TAG (Techniques d'Avant Garde) company went on to power turbocharged engines for McLaren in the mid-1980s. He can be proud that McLaren today is in a strong position and set to return to the glory days which he helped create 35 years ago. Win number 183 can't be too far away.

Briton Norris made his debut with the team in Melbourne in 2019

Through Brown and Seidl's leadership, they have created an environment in which the team is working together with a single purpose, rather than various competing internal factions. And those values start at the top. It was evident at the Hungarian Grand Prix last year - the final race in the year's first triple-header. As the mechanics were working late into the night to pack up and return to base, they were joined by additional member of the team, donning a hi-res jacket.

There was no cheery wave and a date with an early private plane home for this driver. Norris was in the garage, helping his team out. The image of him mucking in went viral on social media. "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together," he wrote underneath the picture. "Three long weeks for my team. Thought they could use a couple more hands."

Today, even Lando Norris would help move those chairs cluttering up the corridors inside the MTC. ■

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

CADWELL PARK: CSCC BY CARL McKELLAR — JUNE 12-13

Ellis won on the road, but Smith was promoted

Glorious sight: Craig Percy was a winner in Special Saloons and Modsports

SMITH INHERITS FUTURE CLASSICS GLORY

Sam Smith's victory in Future Classics was among the star performances of the CSCC's Cadwell Park meeting, but one had to feel for winner on the road Matt Ellis who had given just as much but was stripped of victory by a post-race penalty.

Ellis used the extra power of his Talbot Sunbeam Lotus to hunt down Smith's Mazda MX-5 after emerging from the mandatory two-minute pitstop some 18 seconds down – he and his father Martin having to serve an additional 30s as penalty for a previous victory.

Heading to the Mountain with a lap to go he was through for a hard-earned win it seemed. However, a 30.9s penalty (for short-stopping by 0.9s) was applied and Smith, who had driven just as hard, inherited his first win in CSCC competition.

The outcome could have been different again had both front-row starters – Martin and Oliver Pratt's Morgan Plus 8 and Aston and Tony Blake's TVR Tuscan – taken part (the former sprang a fuel leak when sitting on pole position, the latter was withdrawn after mechanical problems in qualifying).

An odd incident that briefly blocked the pitlane entry just as the pitstop window had opened did not prevent Ian Staines winning a hectic Swinging Sixties Group 1 encounter. Chris Dawson's Mini smote the barriers in a tangle with Tom Pead's BMW but marshals were quick to remove the blockage. Staines' MG Midget emerged the clear winner after Chris Watkinson's closely following Mini suffered stuck-on brakes.

The rapid Lotus Elans of Jamie Keevil and Jon Wolfe were untouchable in the Sixties Group 2 and Classic K races respectively, although Wolfe had a brief scare when an errant pheasant flashed across his windscreen.

There was also late drama for Russell Thomson as his Clio Cup was struck and damaged by a lapped car in the Tin Tops race, but he survived to head home the similar French machine of Tom Mensley. Both drivers reported they'd come close to passing out, such was the heat.

Double Swinging Sixties Gp1 champion Ian Everett won the opening Modsports race in a guest outing in Tim Cairns' MG Midget – surviving a wild clash with Neil Duke's Anglia along the way. Craig Percy's Moggy V8 took a first-ever win in the second race.

Ben Simonds was a clear winner of both Magnificent Sevens races after chief challengers David Watson and David Cutmore retired. Watson did remarkably well to keep his car out of the barriers when a pushrod collapsed along the pitstraight.

RACE WINNERS

Swinging Sixties
Race 1: Ian Staines (MG Midget 1380); **Race 2:** Jamie Keevil (Lotus Elan ST 1594)

Future Classics
Sam Smith (Mazda MX-5 Mk1 1600)

Morgan Challenge
Race 1: Oliver Pratt (Morgan Plus 4600); **Race 2:** Roger Whiteside (Morgan Plus 8 4600)

Special Saloons & Modsports
Race 1: Ian Everett (MG Hexagon Midget 1460); **Race 2:** Craig Percy (Moggy V8 6.2)

Classic K
Jon Wolfe (Lotus Elan 1558)

Modern Classics
Oliver Smith (BMW M3 3200)

Tin Tops
Russell Thomson (Renault Clio Cup 2000)

Magnificent Sevens
Race 1 & 2: Ben Simonds (Caterham CSR 2400)

New Millenium & Open Series
Oliver Smith (BMW M3 3200)

Tin Tops & Puma Cup
Keir McConomy (BMW Mini Cooper S R56)

OULTON PARK: BARC BY PETER SCHERER — JUNE 12

ROSE MADE TO WORK FOR SPORTS SALOON GLORY

Photo: Mick Walker

Paul Rose didn't have an easy ride to victory in the Sports and Saloons race

Paul Rose made it two wins out of two in the Sports and Saloons, when his Saker overcame the fast-starting Spire GTR of Jon Woolfitt.

Rose had to work his way past Paul Dobson's Locost and Paul Woolfitt's Lotus Exige before making his bid for victory. He led past the pits on lap six, before Woolfitt took it back exiting Knickerbrook, with Rose taking to the grass to avoid a backmarker.

But Rose made it stick into Druids and eased himself clear to win by over 10 seconds. Danny Bird's Spire followed Woolfitt home in third, with Dobson just holding onto fourth after a great scrap with David Harvey's Locosaki.

It was a Praga benefit in both races for overall Britcar honours. After taking over from Jay Morton in race one, Angus Fender hunted down Alex Kapadia and Chris Wesemael. Kapadia's lead was wiped out by a safety car intervention and with nine laps to go Fender was ahead, leaving Kapadia to keep Wesemael at bay for second.

Richard Wells led the early part of race two, before Abbie Eaton took charge after the stops, but Fender closed in again to claim win number two. Eaton retained second from Wells/Kapadia. Will Powell/Dave Scaramanga's McLaren GT3 proved unbeatable twice over in the traditional Britcar division.

Michael Clark's Spyder RXC had led the first Radical Summer Cup from the start, with Elliot Goodman's SR3 soon a clear second.

Jason Rishover, Chris Short and Chris Preen battled behind, but with Clark slowing on lap 13, Goodman snatched victory over Clark, with Rishover third and Peter Brookes fourth, after Preen hit Short up the rear at Lodge.

It was a lights-to-flag win for Clark in race two with Goodman and Short holding station behind, in a close and entertaining duel. Frazer McFadden easily won the SR1 class on both occasions.

David Kirkpatrick and Ian Slark shared the Mighty Mini honours. In race one they ran in close formation, both having a share of the lead. Slark led onto the final lap, but Kirkpatrick retook and had 0.168s to spare at the flag.

Slark had better luck in race two, after early leader Neven Kirkpatrick retired. Greg Jenkins was second, having broken clear of a three-car fight for third.

RACE WINNERS

Sports/Saloons
Paul Rose (Saker RAPX)

Britcar Endurance and Praga
Races 1 & 2: Jay Morton/Angus Fender (Praga R1T)

Radical Summer Cup
Race 1: Elliot Goodman (Radical SR3 RSX); **Race 2:** Michael Clark (Radical RXC Spyder)

Mighty Mini
Race 1: David Kirkpatrick; **Race 2:** Ian Slark

KNOCKHILL: BRSCC BY STEPHEN BRUNDSON — JUNE 12-13

ACADEMY RUNNERS STEAL THE SHOW WITH SENSATIONAL KNOCKHILL VISIT

Two wins out of three helped Henry Heaton close the gap at the top of the BRSCC Caterham Seven UK championship at Knockhill last weekend, following an up-and-down meeting for points leader Stephen Nuttall.

Heaton won the opening race in rather fortuitous fashion as race leaders Gordon Sawyer and William Smith came together at Duffus Dip late on, while a superb performance in race two allowed last year's runner-up to double up as Nuttall finished fourth after a jump-start penalty.

Nuttall, who salvaged second in race one following an opening-lap spin, finished third in the final race – won by Sawyer – but crucially behind Heaton who is now just five points behind in the standings.

Despite being their first time racing at Knockhill, the Caterham Academy drivers in both the White and Green Groups put on a spectacular show of skill and racecraft in four entertaining races. William James and Harry George shared the White wins while Geoff Newman and Freddie Chiddicks bagged a Green win apiece, the latter coming in race two which was twice red flagged for incidents.

Local driver Blair McConachie claimed both of the 270R wins, fending off Rob Keogh each time, while Lewis Thompson picked up a pair of 310R victories.

It was a similar story in the Roadsport championship, with Hugo Bush enjoying a perfect weekend, taking both victories.

There was more Scottish joy in the BMW Compact Cup as Steven Dailly claimed a double victory and a third place to increase his points lead. The former Scottish Fiesta ST driver was unstoppable in races one and two and charged through from ninth on the grid in the final race to claim a well-deserved podium.

Chris Jones took the lead of the ST-XR championship with a pair of victories, with Michael Blackburn also triumphing.

RACE WINNERS

Caterham Academy White Group
Race 1: William James; **Race 2:** Harry George

Caterham Academy Green Group
Race 1: Geoff Newman; **Race 2:** Freddie Chiddicks

Caterham Seven UK
Races 1 & 2: Henry Heaton; **Race 3:** Gordon Sawyer

Caterham Seven 270R
Races 1 & 2: Blair McConachie

Caterham Seven 310R
Races 1 & 2: Lewis Thompson

Caterham Roadsport
Races 1 & 2: Hugo Bush

ST-XR Challenge
Race 1: Michael Blackburn (Ford Fiesta ST 150); **Races 2 & 3:** Chris Jones (Ford Fiesta ST)

BMW Compact Cup
Races 1 & 2: Steven Dailly; **Race 3:** Ian Jones

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Mick Walker

SILVERSTONE: MGCC BY MARK PAULSON — JUNE 12-13

MIDGET WINS ARE LIKE BUSES FOR AN OVERJOYED WESTON

Weston and Wildman put on a stirring battle in Midget squabble

Kirkpatrick came out top in the highly competitive MG Trophy

Edd Weston claimed a maiden win the MG Midget & Sprite Challenge at Silverstone, then swiftly followed it with a second. Having slipped to fourth off the line, Weston climbed back to second then stalked the similar Midget of Richard Wildman before edging him by just 0.05 seconds.

"I was concerned that I'd get by him and then he'd go straight by me on the straight again and I'd lose time," explained Weston. "So I hung back, stuck behind him, waited until the last lap and then pounced!"

The win was rewarded with the Ted Reeve Memorial Trophy, remembering the long-time racer who died in 2018. "My dad's been mechanicking for Ted Reeve since I was born," said Weston, who beat Wildman again in race two. "It means a lot to win this."

Both concurrent Cockshoot Cup races were won by Ray Collier from Karl Green, the pair trading the lead on numerous occasions in the first encounter.

Sam Kirkpatrick remains unbeaten in the 2021 MG Trophy as he scored two more wins. Main rival Fred Burgess retired with gearbox failure in the first but gave Kirkpatrick a good contest in the second, producing a fine move for the lead through Stowe and Vale before a mistake let Kirkpatrick back through to win.

Lee Atkins missed out on a double Equipe GTS success after spinning in the second race. British GT racer Andrew Gordon-Colebrook's pressure would not be rewarded however, as his Triumph TR4 overheated and spat out oil, coating Tom Smith's windscreen and causing Smith to go off on the final lap. Through it all came Allan Ross Jones's TR4 to win from Atkins and Smith.

The Mini Se7ens and Miglias each had their own hard-fought race on Saturday, won by Joe Thompson and Endaf Owens, before a combined grid of over 50 cars on Sunday was topped by Aaron Smtih (Miglia) and 1980 champion Jonathan Lewis (Se7en).

With regular challenger Morgan Short retiring with engine failure, Mike Williams was a clear winner of the first MG Cup race. The Rover Tomcats of Richard Buckley and Matt Simpson made life harder for Williams in the second race but the Metro driver still prevailed.

Ollie Neaves matched Kirkpatrick's unbeaten record with two more BCV8 wins. He had to come from behind to win the second after being beaten off the line by Neil Fowler and made a mistake at Vale.

RACE WINNERS

Midget & Sprite Challenge/ Cockshoot Cup
Races 1 & 2: Edd Weston (MG Midget)

MG Trophy
Races 1 & 2: Sam Kirkpatrick (ZR 190)

Equipe GTS
Race 1: Lee Atkins (TVR Grantura 1800S); **Race 2:** Allan Ross Jones (Triumph TR4)

Mini Se7en
Race 1: Joe Thompson; **Race 2:** Jonathan Lewis

Mini Miglia
Race 1: Endaf Owens; **Race 2:** Aaron Smith

MG Cup
Races 1 & 2: Mike Williams (Rover Metro VVC)

BCV8
Races 1 & 2: Ollie Neaves (B GTV8)

Equipe Libre
Race 1: Robin Ellis (Lotus Elan 26R Shapecraft); **Race 2:** Chris Beighton (Sunbeam Le Mans Tiger)

Equipe Pre-'63/50s
Races 1 & 2: Nigel Winchester (Shelby 260)

BRANDS HATCH: 750MC BY MARK LIBBETER — JUNE 12-13

MORGAN AND DEAR SHARE THE SPOILS IN THREE SCORCHING CLASSIC STOCK HATCH BATTLES

Photo: Gary Hawkins

Dear had mixed fortunes, but took Classic Stock Hatch win

Ryan Morgan and Chris Dear both experienced mixed fortunes as they shared the Classic Stock Hatch wins between them at a scorching Brands Hatch.

Morgan claimed the first of three races held for the category on Saturday in his Ford Fiesta XR2 after throttle gremlins forced poleman Dear into a pitlane start in his Peugeot 205 GTi. Andy Philpotts, making his return to the series after missing the most recent Donington round, battled his way through to second in his Fiesta XR2 ahead of the charging Peugeot 205 of Matt Stubington.

A fine outbraking move by Morgan at Paddock on lap five appeared to be decisive in race two, but a time penalty for exceeding track limits left him disgruntled and handed Dear victory. Martin Cayzer came home third in his XR2i. Morgan fought back to win the third encounter following another race-long lead battle.

A race stoppage also disrupted the second of three Hot Hatch encounters, but it could not stop Alistair Camp from claiming another two wins in his Honda Civic ahead of Phil Wright's similar car. Wright ended Camp's winning run in the third event though after diving inside at Druids on the final tour.

Lee Morgan was another driver to enjoy a brace of wins in the trio of F1000 contests. Dan Gore hounded Morgan throughout the first event. Rob Welham, third in the opener, stormed through to win the second race after passing early leader Paul Butcher at Surtees at half-distance. Morgan won race three.

The opening pair of Toyota MR2 races did not escape being red-flagged either. Multiple champion Shaun Traynor claimed the spoils in the opener ahead of Graham Malings once the race had got back underway.

Traynor spun himself at Clearways in race two as he pursued race leader Aaron Cooke, but it was a hefty shunt for Tom Malings at Paddock that would bring a further halt to proceedings. Cooke continued where he left off when the action resumed, leading home a relieved Traynor. Reigning series champion Cooke dominated race three ahead of Cam Walton.

Two strong moves at Paddock helped Ben Powney claim both wins in the Ma7da double header. Silverstone double-winner Danny Andrew claimed a second in race one after Jonathan Lisseter was forced to pit with front wheel arch troubles.

RACE WINNERS

Classic Stock Hatch
Races 1 & 3: Ryan Morgan (Ford Fiesta XR2); **Race 2:** Chris Dear (Peugeot 205 GTi)

Toyota MR2s
Race 1: Shaun Traynor (Roadster); **Races 2 & 3:** Aaron Cooke (Roadster)

F1000
Races 1 & 3: Lee Morgan; **Race 2:** Robert Welham

Ma7da
Races 1 & 2: Ben Powney

BMW Club Car Racing
Race 1: Niall Bradley (BMW E46 M3); **Race 2:** Brad Sheehan (BMW E46 M3)

Hot Hatch
Races 1 & 2: Alistair Camp (Honda Civic); **Race 3:** Phil Wright (Honda Civic Type-R)

Roadsports
Chris Mills (BMW E36 M3)

Bikesports
Race 1: Joe Stables (Radical PR6); **Race 2:** Scott Mittell (Mittell MC41RR)

Club Enduro Championship
Carl Swift/Robert Baker (Seat Leon Eurocup)

MALLORY PARK: CMMC BY JASON NOBLE — JUNE 13

BLACKMAN LEAVES IT LATE IN INTERMARQUE SILHOUETTES

Two snappy five-minute sprints made for a raucous Intermarque Silhouette contest at Mallory Park's Classic and Modern Motorsport Festival on Sunday as Malcolm Blackman somehow powered his Vauxhall Tigra to two last-lap victories.

Fellow Tigra ace Steve Burrows was the unlucky recipient of Blackman's winning move first time out. Late-braking down the Stebbe Straight allowed Blackman to nip through, with Ray Harris in the Ginetta on the receiving end second time around after a tighter Shaw's Hairpin apex gave Blackman the momentum he needed to pass.

Darrell Woods left Leicestershire with both 500 Owners Association trophies, but the star of the weekend was Vintage Sports-Car Club Frazer Nash racer Tom Waterfield, who scorched to a front row qualifying and two podiums on his series debut.

Waterfield in the Cooper-Norton Mk9 finished second in the opener, and in the later race got the better start to swoop around the outside of Woods' Staride at Gerard's Bend before Woods wrestled it back.

Double Oulton Park winner Mark Eales proved to be the comeback king in the MG Metro Cup after recovering handsomely from a grassy excursion in the Esses that dropped him from the lead to seventh. He deftly worked his way through the pack and snatched second on the final tour from racing newcomer Ben Williams.

That was made all the sweeter when the faster-starting Eales robbed Jon Moore through the first bend to record the victory in the second race.

The Classic and Modern Motorsport Club's Super Saloons and Tin Tops combined with the Welsh Sports and Saloon Car Championship for two chunky mixed grids, both settled in favour of local driver Joss Ronchetti in the Talbot Sunbeam Lotus, while Rod Birley (Ford Escort WRC) recovered from 26th to fourth in race two.

RACE WINNERS

MG Metro Cup
Race 1: Jon Moore; **Race 2:** Mark Eales

CMMC Intermarque Silhouettes
Races 1 & 2: Malcolm Blackman (Vauxhall Tigra)

500 Owners Association Racing Championship
Races 1 & 2: Darrell Woods (Staride Mk3)

CMMCS Super Saloons/ CMMCS Tin Tops/Welsh Sports and Saloon Car Championship
Races 1 & 2: Joss Ronchetti (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus)

Modified Ford Series
Races 1 & 2: Dave Cockell (Ford Escort Cosworth)

CMMC Classic Challenge
Eike Wellhausen (Lister Knobbly)

Advertising enquiries: 01732 446757

RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

THRUXTON: BARC BY MARCUS PYE — JUNE 12-13

John Spiers and Thruxton favourite Tiff Needell won

Ric Wood was the Historic Saloons winner on Sunday afternoon

ALDERSLADE TOPS THRUXTON SALOON BATTLE

Sunshine, some superb racing and sideshows entertained spectators and car club members at the annual Thruxton Classic. Saturday's HRDC Jack Sears Trophy Pre-'66 saloon car race animated onlookers as Neil Brown and racy Roy Alderslade waggled their Lotus Cortinas' tails to lurid angles trying to depose Alex Thistlethwayte's very well driven Mustang.

When the window opened for 90-second pitstops, Brown lost ground, then Thistlethwayte's gear linkage broke. Tiff Needell forged John Spiers' Cortina past Alderslade, only for his gearbox to fail on the last lap. An overjoyed Alderslade thus beat Spiers/Needell and Brown, with Mike Jordan's Austin Cooper S fourth.

Spiers and Needell's weekend had started promisingly with third in the '50s sportscar contest, sharing the former's Lister-Jaguar Knobbly. Chris Ward relayed historic newcomer Rob Smith to victory in a similar car, half a minute clear of James Cottingham/Harvey Stanley (Tojeiro-Jaguar). Billy Bellinger/Keith Ahlers (Lola Mk1) finished a fine fourth.

Matthew Wrigley won then faltered

For Spiers/Needell, Sunday was better still, John starting with Allstars victory over David Smithies (Cobra Daytona) and Adrian Willmott (Studebaker Lark). In the Classic Jaguar Challenge, John's inspired stop from fourth, as the window opened under a safety car, returned Tiff to the crocodile without losing a lap. Jon Minshaw, Gary Pearson and Mark Donnor/Andrew Smith pursued in vain. E-types also ruled in Pre-'63 GT, in which Jack Minshaw finished 1.5s shy of Cottingham/Stanley.

Saturday's Historic Touring Car Challenge race fell to Mark Farmer and Adrian Willmott's shrill Ric Wood-built Ford Capri-GAA. Andy Middlehurst opened in Jonathan Bailey's original Nissan Skyline GT-R R32 and they finished six seconds adrift, shadowed by Paul Mensley's Sierra Cosworth. Wood, whose turbo pipe blew off on day one, scorched through to beat aggregate winners Farmer/Willmott on Sunday. Needell/Spiers earned Tony Dron Trophy Gp1 gold in John's Hermetite Capri 3.0S.

Rob Manger's single-seater initiative was well supported, but cruelly his freshly-restored ex-Pierre Petit's Ralt-VW RT3's engine detonated during qualifying. Although aimed at FAtlantic, F3 and FF2000 cars, veteran Peter Williams entered his ex-Christian Debias F2 Ralt RT1 and won on aggregate after Saturday's runaway winner Matt Wigley's March broke.

Gareth Burnett/Michael Birch won MRL's Pre-War race as clutch bothers slowed Oliver and Tim Llewellyn's Bentley. Similar issues failed to stop Ben Colburn's Classic Alfa Challenge dominance. Chris Snowdon (GTV) repassed James Wright (75 Turbo) for second after a race-long duel.

RACE WINNERS

RAC Woodcote/Stirling Moss Trophies
Chris Ward/Rob Smith (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly)

HRDC Jack Sears Trophy
Roy Alderslade (Ford Lotus Cortina)

Pre-'63 GT
James Cottingham/Harvey Stanley (Jaguar E-type)

CRCC Jochen Rindt Trophy
Race 1: Matthew Wrigley (March-BDA 79B); **Race 2:** Peter Williams (Ralt-BMW RT1)

HTCC & Tony Dron Trophy
Race 1: Mark Farmer/Adrian Willmott (Ford Capri-GAA); **Race 2:** Ric Wood (Nissan Skyline GT-R R32)

HRDC Allstars Pre-'66
John Spiers (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly)

Pre-War Sports Cars
Gareth Burnett/Michael Birch (Talbot AV105)

Pre-'66 Jaguar Challenge
John Spiers/Tiff Needell (Jaguar E-type)

HRDC Classic Alfa Challenge
James Colburn (Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT)

CASTLE COMBE: CCRC BY STEFAN MACKLEY — JUNE 12

RECORD-BREAKING PACE FOR LEANEY ON HIS WAY TO F3 BRACE

Stefano Leaney set a new outright lap record of the Castle Combe Circuit as well as securing a brace of wins in the F3 Cup last weekend.

The previous lap record, a 59.387 seconds set in 2005 by Dan Clarke, was smashed in the opening race with a 58.759s (113.34mph). Leaney went even quicker in race two, posting a 58.596s (113.66mph), before spinning but still had enough in hand to recover and retain the lead on his way to another comfortable victory.

The best action came from the Heritage Formula Ford encounters, as David Cobbold (Van Diemen RF89) just beat 2006 Combe FF1600 champion Matt Rivett (Van Diemen RF91) in the opener after a thrilling battle. He was on course for another win in the second, but he and Rivett came together on the final lap exiting Bobbies, allowing Paul Barnes (Swift 92) to take his first outright win since 2007.

Sam Gay and Collin Tester won the Trackday Championship contest in their Honda Integra, the latter holding off the hard-charging Chris Payne (Caterham Supersport) in the final laps after the race was red-flagged in the opening minutes for barrier damage at Tower.

Simon Rudd won the first Focus Cup race from Rob Gaffney and Lewis Ryan with championship leader Scott Parkin, who finished the opener in fifth, taking a lights-to-flag victory in race two having defended from Ryan and Rudd throughout.

A broken driveshaft on the way to the grid for polesitter James Drew-Williams left Lee Fern to win the Monoposto F3 opener in his Dallara F301. He also won race two, again from 1400 class winner Jason Timms, as Drew-Williams finished third from 14th on the grid.

Nigel Davers just held on to win the opening Monoposto 1000 contest aboard his Jedi Mk6, capitalising on the absence of championship leader Dan Gore. Being stuck in fifth gear prevented him from doubling up as Myles Castaldini took top spot, from Bruno Costa and Davers.

RACE WINNERS

F3 Cup
Races 1 & 2: Stefano Leaney (Dallara F317)

Heritage FF1600
Race 1: David Cobbold (Van Diemen RF89); **Race 2:** Paul Barnes (Swift 92)

Trackday Championship
Sam Gay/Collin Tester (Honda Integra)

Focus Cup
Race 1: Simon Rudd; **Race 2:** Scott Parkin

Monoposto - F3, 2000, Classic & 1400
Races 1 & 2: Lee Fern (Dallara F301)

Monoposto - M1000, 1800 & 1600
Race 1: Nigel Davers (Jedi Mk6); **Race 2:** Myles Castaldini (Van Diemen RF94)

MONDELLO PARK: ICCR BY LEO NULTY — JUNE 12-13

THREE AND EASY FOR TIN-TOP LEGEND CULLEN AT THRILLING MONDELLO PARK

Michael Cullen was a triple winner at Mondello Park at the weekend, adding a Fiesta ST win to his Stryker double, and leaving the venue with the lead in both championships, joint with fellow winner Graham McDonnell in the Fiestas.

Ulick Burke looked set to match the Irish saloon legend as he added a Fiesta Zetec win to his duo of ITCC wins. The weighing scales at post-Zetec race scrutineering disagreed though and he was left with just a double.

Formula Vee Ireland enjoyed the largest grids of the weekend, with reigning champion Anthony Cross sharing the Vee wins with Dan Polley in a pair of highly entertaining races.

Shane Murphy was another to do the double, a reverse grid second time round not hindering the reigning Seat Supercup champion. Similarly, Gerard O'Connell took two strong wins in BOSS Ireland, despite a strong challenge from Sylvie Mullins in the latter stages of race two.

Michael Barrable and James Fleming shared the Fiesta Zetec spoils after two action-packed races.

Bernard Foley's V8-powered MG was untouchable in both HRCA races, once he had disposed of the fast-starting Bill Griffin in his newly acquired Lotus 7.

Michael Barrable and James Fleming took a Fiesta Zetec win apiece with Aidan Byrne showing the guile that claimed him a previous championship to take a pair of Future Classic wins.

Once Paul O'Connell's new GP2 car faltered, the closely following Gerard O'Connell was clear to take a maiden Mondello Park win; something the Northern Ireland visitor repeated in race two in his Dallara World Series car.

Kevin Sheane and Paul McLaughlin shared the Formula Sheane spoils.

Gary Corcoran and Paul Parr shared the Irish Supercar wins, the battle's typically entertaining in the fibreglass-clad spaceframe cars.

RACE WINNERS

Future Classics
Race 1 & 2: Aidan Byrne (Toyota Celica)

Fiesta Zetec Championship
Race 1: Michael Barrable; **Race 2:** James Fleming

Fiesta ST Championship
Race 1: Graham McDonnell; **Race 2:** Michael Cullen

Formula BOSS Ireland
Race 1 & 2: Gerard O'Connell (Dallara World Series)

Irish Strykers
Race 1 & 2: Michael Cullen

HRCA Championship
Race 1 & 2: Bernard Foley (MGBGT V8)

Formula Sheane
Race 1: Paul McLaughlin; **Race 2:** Kevin Sheane

Formula Vee Championship:
Race 1: Anthony Cross (Sheane); **Race 2:** Dan Polley (Sheane)

Seat Supercup Ireland
Race 1 & 2: Shane Murphy

Irish Supercars
Race 1: Gary Corcoran; **Race 2:** Paul Parr

Irish Touring Car Championship.
Race 1 & 2: Ulick Burke (Honda Integra)

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

Martin Schanche and drama were rarely too far removed. And thankfully, given this, YouTube caters well for our inimitable readers' Q&A guest this week. Particularly so on the 'Rallycross VHS DVD' channel, which uploads footage from enthusiasts' VHSs and DVDs that would otherwise risk being lost.

The channel has two decades' worth of flamboyant fish-tailing action from 'Mister Rallycross', and indeed has been so kind as to put it together in a playlist that you can watch at: youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYAeEQXfJdsgoSbP6oduKgs6QLgbfjFnt or via searching 'Martin Schanche through the years 79 to 99'.

You'll be able to pick out your own personal highlights, but look out for Schanche claiming his 1981 European title at Lydden Hill in typical showman style.

Any finish would have done him for the crown but, starting at the back, he muscled his way to first by the opening turn. He later celebrates on his cool-down lap by driving his Ford Escort…while standing up.

Schanche also shows his wares in 1982 at the Northern Irish Boyd's Quarry venue (which the commentator likens to Nelson Piquet turning up at Kirkistown) and in 1990 he even upholds national honour for Norway at Croft's Internations Cup in his RS200. And there's plenty more besides.

Graham Keilloh

TV GUIDE

After all the fun of Baku, Formula 1 now heads to a track that's, erm, less known for its thrills: Paul Ricard for the French GP.

Channel 4 offers has its usual highlights: qualifying's best bits are on Saturday at 1830hrs-2000hrs and the race's are on Sunday at 1830hrs-2100hrs. Sky Sports F1's weekend coverage also kicks off as usual with its preview F1 Show on Thursday at 1700hrs-1800hrs followed by the drivers' press conference at 1800hrs-1930hrs.

The DTM campaign, with its new GT3 regs, gets underway this weekend and if you need the lowdown, BT Sport/ESPN has a quick preview on Saturday at 0900hrs-0930hrs before its coverage of qualifying.

Plus you can check out the best of this weekend's Rally Poland European Rally Championship curtain raiser on Eurosport 2. Day one's highlights are early on Sunday at 0130hrs-0200hrs, while highlights of the whole thing are shown early on Monday at 0100hrs-0130hrs, as well as on Tuesday (2200hrs-2230hrs) on Eurosport 1.

Graham Keilloh

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 FRENCH GRAND PRIX PAUL RICARD

- **Practice 1:** Friday, 1000hrs-1145hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Practice 2:** Friday, 1345hrs-1530hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Practice 3:** Saturday, 1045hrs-1210hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1300hrs-1530hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Race:** Sunday, 1230hrs-1700hrs (start time: 1400hrs), Sky Sports F1

FIA FORMULA 3 PAUL RICARD

- **Practice:** Friday, 0900hrs-0955hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Qualifying:** Friday, 1245hrs-1325hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Sprint race 1:** Saturday, 0900hrs-1000hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Sprint race 2:** Saturday, 1530hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Feature race:** Sunday, 1030hrs-1130hrs, Sky Sports F1

FORMULA E CHAMPIONSHIP PUEBLA

- **Qualifying 1:** Saturday, 1745hrs-1920hrs, Eurosport 2
- **Race 1:** Saturday, 2130hrs-2335hrs, Eurosport 2
- **Qualifying 2:** Sunday, 1745hrs-1920hrs, Eurosport 2
- **Race 2:** Sunday, 2130hrs-2335hrs, Eurosport 2

INDYCAR ROAD AMERICA

- **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1900hrs-2030hrs, Sky Sports F1
- **Race:** Sunday, 1730hrs-2000hrs, Sky Sports F1

DTM MONZA

- **Qualifying 1:** Saturday, 0930hrs-1015hrs, BT Sport/ESPN
- **Race 1:** Saturday, 1215hrs-1400hrs, BT Sport/ESPN
- **Qualifying 2:** Sunday, 0930hrs-1015hrs, BT Sport 1
- **Race 2:** Sunday, 1215hrs-1400hrs, BT Sport 3

DTM TROPHY MONZA

- **Race 1:** Saturday, 1400hrs-1500hrs, BT Sport/ESPN
- **Race 2:** Sunday, 1400hrs-1500hrs, BT Sport/ESPN

ETCR VALLELUNGA

- **Race:** Sunday, 1400hrs-1530hrs, Eurosport 2

NASCAR NASHVILLE

- **Race:** Sunday, 2000hrs-0030hrs, Premier Sports 1

LISTINGS

SATURDAY
■ **Oulton Park, Cheshire**
BRSCC meeting: FF1600, Fiestas, Fiesta Junior, Track Attack, CityCar Cup **Starts** racing from 1245hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) **Admission** adult £14, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

SATURDAY
■ **Cadwell Park, Lincs**
VSCC meeting: Pre '61 Racing Cars, Frazer Nash/GN, Pre '35 Grand Prix Cars, VSCC Specials, Pre-War MGs, Pre-War Sports **Starts** racing from 1300hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** adult £19, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

SATURDAY-SUNDAY
■ **Silverstone, Northants**
BRSCC meeting: Mazda MX-5, FF1600, Club Sport Trophy, Fun Cup, Zeo Proto Cup **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1145hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1000hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £14 **Web** silverstone.co.uk Advance tickets only

SATURDAY-SUNDAY
■ **Knockhill, Fife**
KMSC meeting: Super Lap Scotland, Mod Sports, Scottish Legends, BARC Junior Saloon Car Championship, BARC Pickup Truck Racing **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1000hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1000hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £15 **Web** knockhill.com Advance tickets only

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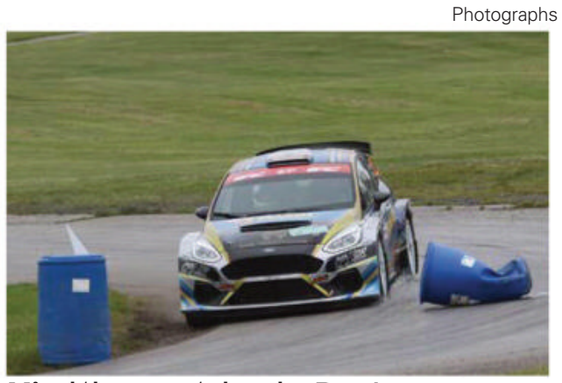
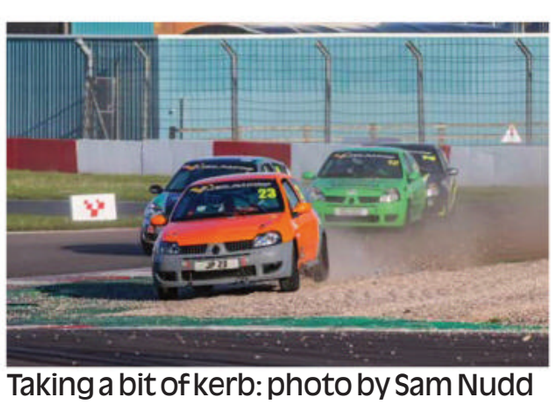
ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

Something's not right... Photo from David Harbey



Mind the gap: taken by Ben Lawrence

James Lomax captured the old and new



Taking a bit of kerb: photo by Sam Nudd

Alfa leads the way, from Rich Cantson

NEXT WEEK — OUT THURSDAY, JUNE 24

*Correct at time of going to press

READERS' Q&A: MARTIN SHORT
The national racer who achieved his Le Mans dreams

Merc man aims to get his attack back on track

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108370

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108371

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108301

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108365

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108366

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108233

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107729

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107912

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107744

PORSCHE 911

1974, 82300 miles, £199,995. 911 2.7 MFi. Gemini blue, beige/brown trim, one of six UK Targas. Two year full restoration at Hexagon Classics. Please call 02083485151, Greater London.

108374

PORSCHE 911

1976, 570 miles, £139,995. 911 2.7S Targa, matching numbers, as new, left hand drive. Please call 02083485151, Greater London.

108375

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107923

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